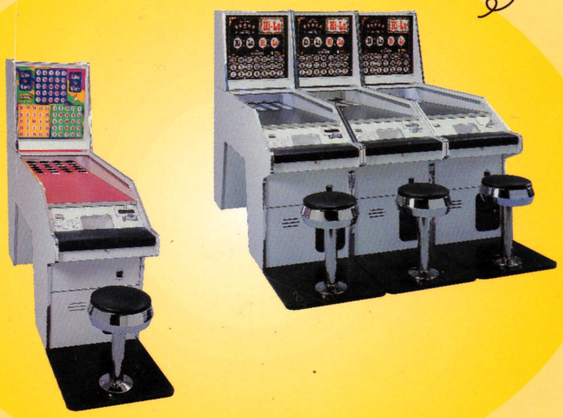
PLAY METER Magazine

VOLUME 23, No. 10 FOR THE COIN-OP ENTERTAINMENT/FEC INDUSTRY SEPTEMBER 1997



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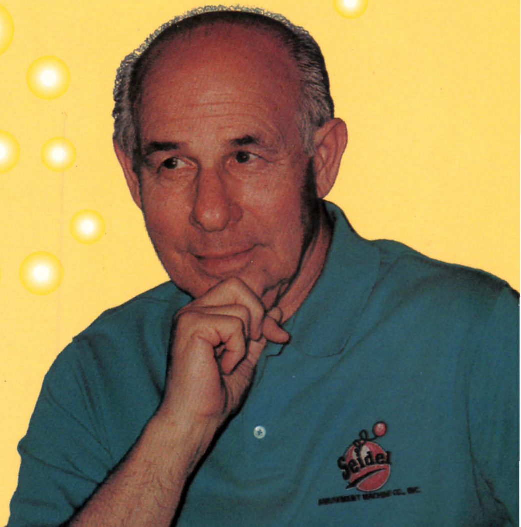

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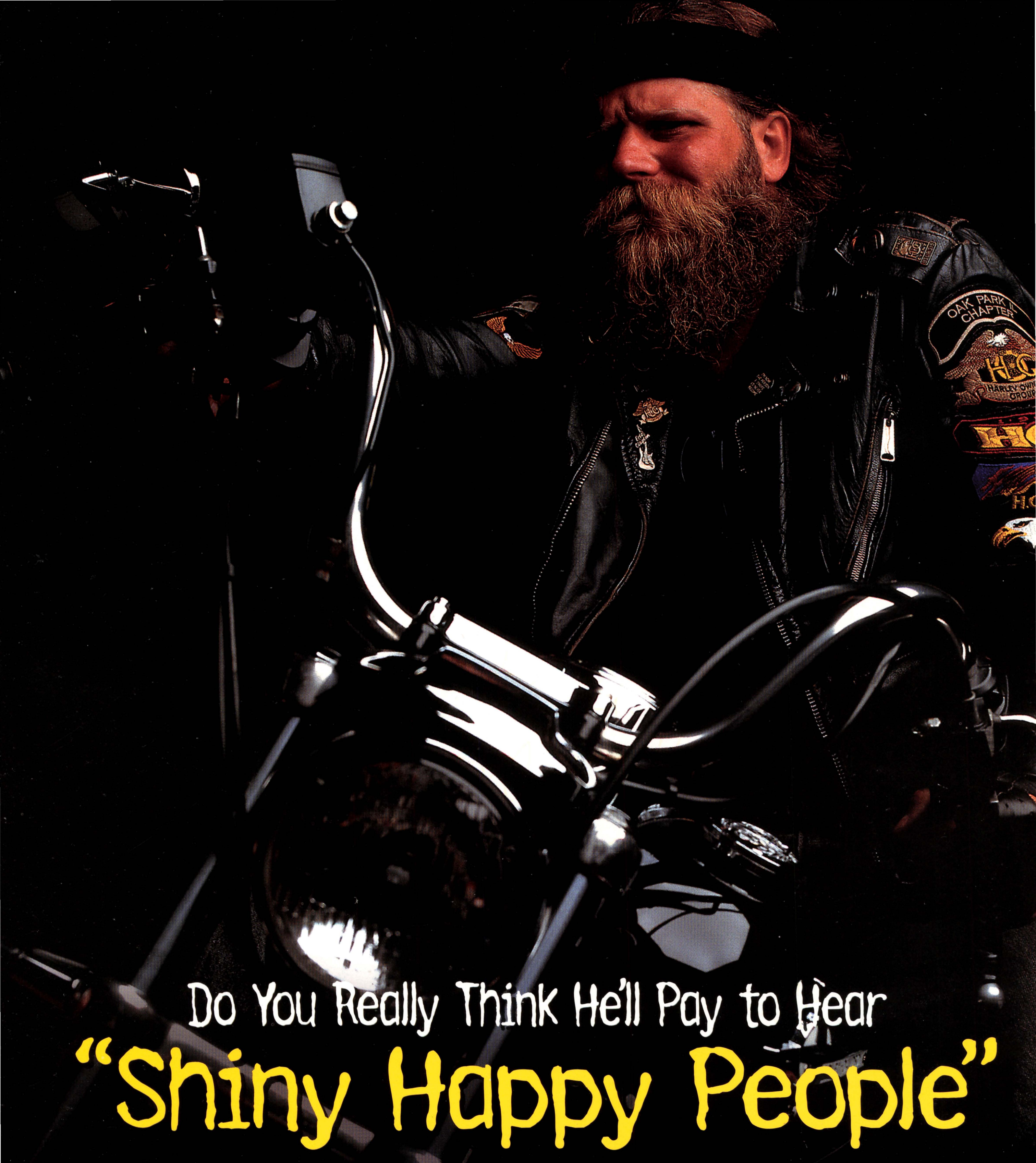
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News BULLETIN

SEGA, WORLDWIDE VIDEO LITIGATE OVER IMPORTED GAME MARQUEE

Attorneys representing San Diego-Calif.,-based Worldwide Video Entertainment and one of its customers, the Pak Mann Arcade, filed a countersuit in federal district court last month against Sega after the Japanese video game manufacturer and its American counterpart Sega GameWorks sued the two for copyright violation over the use of two *House of the Dead* marquees in conjunction with an imported parallel board.

Attorney Richard Stern, who represented Bill Beckham of Red Baron Amusement in past parallel controversies, is representing Worldwide (owned by Brad Brown) and the arcade (owned by Edward Looi). In the countersuit, Stern and co-counsel Richard Morganstern claim Sega is in violation of anti-trust and unfair business practice laws by allegedly attempting to intimidate operators through its suit, thrust the additional expense of dedicated games on them, and ultimately eliminate them as competitors to its own location operations including the GameWorks chain.

In its initial suit against Worldwide and the Pak Mann Arcade, Sega's attorneys argued that Worldwide unlawfully exploited "reproductions" of the marquees by offering them for sale—when they weren't purchased through an authorized Sega distributor in the United States—and that the arcade violated copyright protection by "attracting customers" with the marquees. The marquees were reportedly turned over to Sega attorneys after the court temporarily barred their use or display.

Stern contends in the countersuit that the marquees contained no notice of copyright protection and were purchased "directly or indirectly" from Sega, adding that the cabinets used were original Sega *Virtua Cop* dedicated cabinets. "The marquees were not copies, they were original Sega artwork," Brown told *Play Meter*. The countersuit goes on to charge Sega with discrimination and reneging on its "public promise" in 1995 to market games in the same format in all markets. That so-called public promise came in the form of an agreement reached by the manufacturing community following the sunset of Congressional legislation allowing the operation of parallel imports.

However, GameWorks president Al Stone said the promise was to market games in similar formats when possible. Stone said the key issue was Sega's ability to retain rights over how its products are presented. The advanced technology of Sega's product requires a certain sophistication of presentation, including medium resolution monitors and high-quality cabinets, to ensure popularity and earnings.

"We have an established distributor network and want to protect Sega's ability to ensure its more powerful equipment is displayed in the best light and not in run-of-the-mill cabinets," Stone said. "We don't feel that because kits are sold overseas for high-quality, permanent cabinets, they should necessarily be sold as kits in the United States."

MYERS TO OVERSEE TAKEOVER OF BETSON PACIFIC OFFICES

David Myers, who has recently taken over the position of vice president of sales and marketing, Western region, for H. Betti Industries, will coordinate a smooth transition in the takeover of Betson Pacific's four distributing offices in Buena Park, Calif.; San Fransisco, Calif.; Phoenix, Ariz.; and Las Vegas, Nev. At press time no details of the move were available. "It's no secret," said H. Betti chairman Peter Betti. "We will make a formal announcement when it's time."

QUANTUM 3D TO WORK WITH HANAHO, MANGO GRITS ON PC ARCADE GAMES

Quantum 3D, exclusive distributor of the Obsidian family of real-time 3-D graphics accelerator boards developed by 3Dfx Interactive, recently announced two new partnerships with companies striving to bring PC-based games to the arcade and location-based entertainment markets: HanaHo Arcade PC and Mango Grits. The company formed a strategic alliance with HanaHo APC that will allow the latter company to become one of the first to ship coin-op games compliant with standards developed by Intel and adopted by the newly formed Open Arcade Architecture Forum using Quantum 3D's Obsidian graphics board and Game Control Interface (GCI). "The HanaHo APC coin-op systems that employ the Pentium II processor, our Obsidian graphics accelerators, and GCI will deliver real-time 3-D game performance and input responsiveness that is superior to anything available from proprietary coin-op manufacturers," said Quantum 3D vice president of sales and marketing Ross Smith. "And since the Arcade PC is based on the PC, it's re-usable, so operators can amortize their investment in a game platform over several games." HanaHo has plans to introduce a multiplayer racing game, *Ultimate Race*, developed by the French firm Kalisto.

In its second announcement, Quantum 3D and the game development firm Mango Grits detailed plans to implement the former's graphics board and GCI in the latter's soon-to-be-released PC-based game, *Barrage*, which has been designed in scaleable fashion including the use of a motion platform from Jesler Enterprises. "The team at Mango Grits has always pushed the frontier of game technology," noted Smith. "To have them choose our Obsidian and GCI products for their coin-op and motion-based applications is a great endorsement."

APBI FILES PATENT SUITS OVER PHOTO STICKER MACHINES

APBI Interactive Kiosk in Alexandria, Va., announced last month that it had filed two separate complaints in federal district courts in Maryland and Delaware alleging patent infringement of its *Sticker Station* photo sticker machine and the process used to produce the vended product.

The suit in Maryland was filed against SNK Corp. of Japan and its United States subsidiary SNK Corp. of America, claiming that sales of its *Neo Print* photo sticker machine constitutes "willful and wanton infringement" of APBI's patent. While representatives of SNK were not available for comment at press time, company officials have said in the past that introduction of their technology in the Japanese market prior to APBI's patent, as well as the exhibition of photo sticker machines by other companies at previous trade shows, undermines APBI's claim to patent protection. The second suit filed in Delaware district court is directed against Foto Fantasy Inc. of Windham, N.H.

NEVADA OPERATORS GET TAX RELIEF

Doug Minter of Tip Top Amusement in Carson City, Nev., recently reported several tax victories for operators, both across the state and in the city of Reno. According to Minter, Nevada operators, who had previously paid sales tax on all vended products, will now be taxed only on vended cigarettes and cup drinks as well as food prepared on-site and sold through vending machines. Minter, who praised the work of lobbyist Robert Barengo in passing the legislation, said some operators could save up to a quarter of a million dollars in taxes. On the local scene in Reno, operators will also begin paying gross receipts on their share of all machine revenue as opposed to a previous per machine license fee of $57. This could reduce their tax burden annually by as much as $40 per machine.

ATC CORRECT PHONE NUMBER

We apologize to readers who tried to contact the Mt. Juliet, Tenn. company, after perusing their ad in *Play Meter* last month, and got a disconnected phone number. ATC is alive and well and still open for business. Advertising information sent to us by a third party contained a typographical error in the phone number. To reach ATC, please call Tim Peach at the correct number, (615)754-7253.

MORE PC-BASED GAMES COMING

▼ Scottish software developer Inner Workings, which showed its PC-based flying simulator *Plane Crazy* at ASI `97, will debut the game in the coin-op market this December, according to *Next Generation*, a consumer game publication. The game will reportedly sell for approximately $7,000, be upgradeable with new software, and run on a 266 MHz Pentium II with 32 MB of RAM, a 3Dfx graphics card, and CD-ROM drive.

▼ A Philadelphia-area company, Network Entertainment Game Systems, is reportedly planning to introduce a line of PC-based video games that will feature titles that have already achieved success in the home market.

▼ Canadian-based National Electronic Technologies has announced plans to exhibit its public Internet machine, *VideoNET*, at AMOA `97 in Atlanta. The machine will feature access to the Internet, e-mail, online games updated regularly, contests and advertising, content blocking software, and updated news and current events.

WMS SPINS OFF MIDWAY SUBSIDIARY

The board of directors of WMS Industries has authorized a spin-off, subject to certain conditions, of its 33,400,000 shares (or 86.8% interest) in Midway Games Inc. on a pro-rata basis to WMS stockholders. Midway completed its initial public offering of 5,100,000 shares of common stock Oct. 29, 1996. If all goes smoothly the spin-off will result in the distribution to WMS stockholders of 1.38 shares of Midway common stock for each currently outstanding share of WMS common stock. For more on the spin-off and details of new Midway product, turn to "Coin-Op News" (pg. 22).

ASTRO GAINS SIMULATOR RIGHTS

Worldwide Leisure Corp. Ltd. of Great Britain has granted exclusive North American distributing and manufacturing rights to Astro Distributing and Ortsa Products of Rock Island, Ill., for the Viper XI interactive 3-D flight simulator, a one-seat enclosed capsule with networking capabilities, large format video monitor, and aviation-style joystick. For more details, call Astro, (800)797-7066 or (309)786-7066; fax (309)786-7065 or e-mail (asstroman@aol.com).

CIGARETTE VENDING ISSUE HEATS UP

Attorneys have filed a petition on behalf of AMOA members requesting the Food and Drug Administration to amend regulations on cigarette vending to allow the use of lock-out devices in non-age restricted locations. The regulations, currently pending appeal, bar the operation of a cigarettte vending machine in such locations. AMOA is also considering a massive lawsuit against the FDA for an illegal taking of property or interests of over $2 billion in lost profits over a five-year period as a result of governmental action against tobacco vending. Copies of the petition are available; call (800)691-4636 or on AMOA's Web site (http://www.amoa.com).

Members of the tobacco committee also met with members of Congress earlier in the summer to urge passage of a law that would allow lock-out devices and protest inclusion of a ban on cigarette vending in any settlement between states and the tobacco industry. That ban was part of the proposed settlement agreement. Committee chairman Terry Davis met last month with White House staff and Donna Shalala, secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, to argue for support of lock-out devices or compensation for any lost revenue as a result of a vending ban.

COIN CONCEPTS CLOSES ITS DOORS

After 10 years of producing quality redemption games Coin Concepts Inc. of East Brunswick, N.J., closed down Aug. 29. The product line will continue on with service and parts support provided by Bay Tek of Pulaski, Wis., which has agreed to purchase certain assets of CCI. In addition, Bay Tek will also represent both Sound Leisure and K.W. Systems lines formerly represented by CCI. To reach Bay Tek, call (920)822-3951; for Art or Gary Warner at CCI, call (732)390-9009 or contact Gary via e-mail (gwarner18@aol.com). ▲

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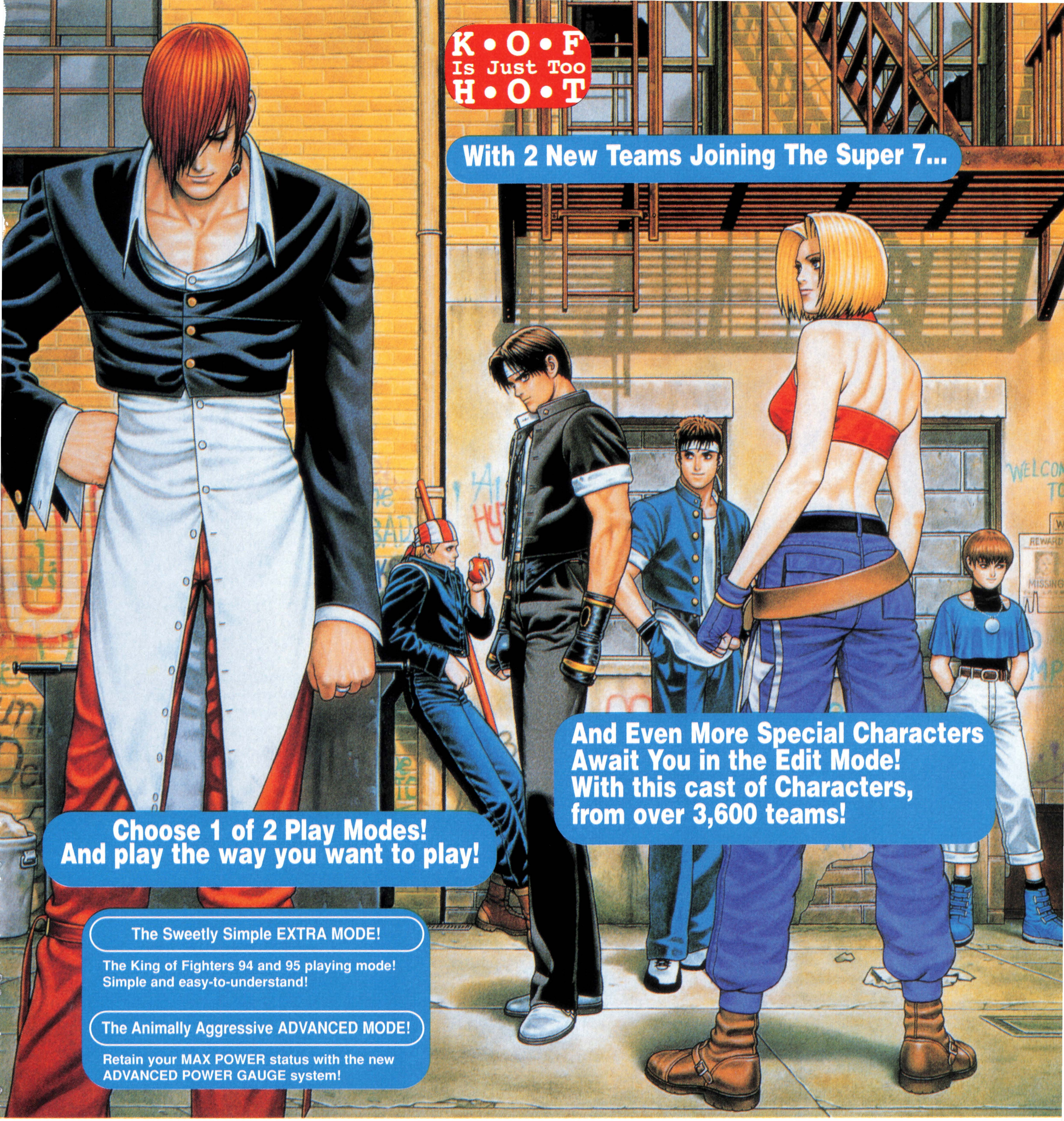

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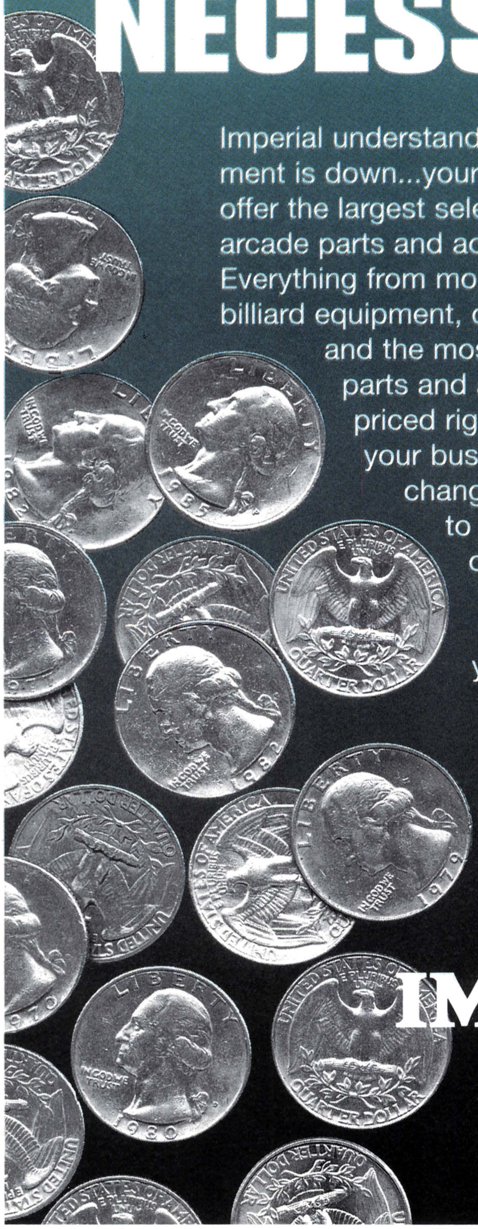

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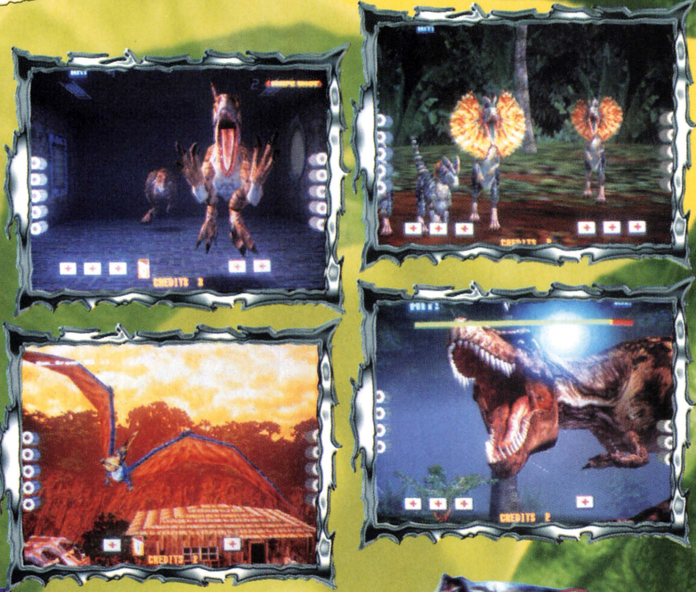
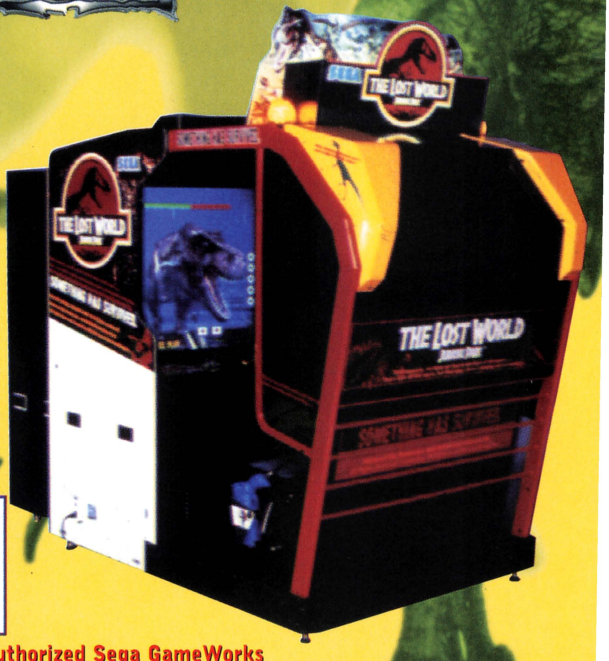


Los Angeles arcade earned $1,447.50 the first 7 days. Another Southern California arcade reported $1,888.75 for one week of operation! Can you survive this?



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CONTENTS

VOLUME 23
NO. 10
SEPTEMBER 1997

See page 82

FUN EXPO PREVIEW

70 **STICKING WITH A GOOD THING:**
Want a low-cost, low-maintenance, high-return machine to add to your route? Sticker vending is hot right now, for good reason.

82 **PUTTER'S PARADISE—MINIATURE GOLF:**
For nearly 70 years families have gravitated to this sport, which is gaining in popularity and sophistication.

95 **PLAYING THROUGH TOURING THE GREENS:**
Take a trip around North America to seven locations that feature miniature golf as a crowd-pleasing anchor attraction.

100 **IAFEC LOOKS INTO ITS CRYSTAL BALL:**
Sample predictions: to endure and triumph, know what business you are in, cater to your market, and be creative.

104 **KID'S GUIDE TO LAS VEGAS:**
If you are under 21 (or just young at heart) and looking for fun activities in Las Vegas, here's a teen resident's recommendations.

108 **FUN EXPO/LBE CONFERENCE PLANNER:**
Check out the schedules for the 7th Fun Expo and 1st Location-Based Entertainment Conference this month in Las Vegas, plus the Expo exhibitor list (111-115) and floor plan (116).

TECHNICIAN'S CORNER

TECHNICAL TOPICS 125
Randy Fromm (exclusive in Play Meter) looks at Neotec monitor circuits and provides a helpful troubleshooting flowchart.

TICKET TECH 131
"Ticket Vic" Fortenbach puts the success of an FEC operation squarely on customer service and game attendants.

See page 70

COVER

The future looks bright for Seidel Amusement Machine Co. Inc. After 37 years, Ed Seidel has decided to plan for the future and begin spending a little more time at leisure and a little less time working. Ed expects the Seidel tradition to continue under the two newest additions to his management team. Pictured: (lower right) Ed Seidel; (upper left) seated on a new and innovative game to be introduced at Fun Expo this month are new general manager Barry Watkins (l) and new national sales manager Bob Rakel (r); also the popular games *Smokin' Token, Goin' Rollin', Hi-Lo LXI, Pokereno LXI, Lite-A-Line LXI, Twenty-One LXI,* and *Hitter's Rally.*

DEPARTMENTS

News Bulletin 3
Mailbox 9
From the Editor 14
Equipment Poll 16
Up Front 20
Coin-Op News 22
Who's News 40
International Scene 46
From Left Field 56
Eye on Asia 58
Through the Looking Glass 60
Cover Story 64
Game Room 118
The Legal Eagle 119
Tax Tips 122
Sporting Edge 133
What's New 140
Classified 147
Calendar 210

Play
Meter
MAILBOX

PlaySmart has its say

I am appreciative of the opportunities your magazine has given PlaySmart for exposure in the past. Play Meter has every right to solicit editorial content from whomever they choose so I have no grounds to object to having been excluded in your July issue, but your subscribers do! PlaySmart has been addressing the issues that your article is saying are important for the last four years.

Here are some examples:

On page 68 it says, "broadening the appeal of attractions in a children's entertainment venue has the added benefit of eliminating some of the distinctions between young children and pre-teens thus garnering a larger cross section of the market." It goes on to say, "the key is designing experiences that appeal to kids between the ages of eight and 12."

PlaySmart equipment has such universal appeal that our operators are having very successful Teen Nights, featuring our playgrounds. Even a McDonald's restaurant customer found that older children's demand to play was so great that they have Big Kids Night twice a week.

The article continues, "attraction mixes that include everybody are going to be the wave of the future...everybody's going to be able to play together in the same place...Adults don't want to just watch their kids play. They want to join in with them."

PlaySmart builds a playground that accommodates the entire family. Our entryways are easier for adults to pass through, our Web floors are wide like sidewalks and don't hurt adult's knees, our playgrounds consist of spacious play areas where families actually have room to play together.

Another source is quoted, "All CECs to date have failed miserably in involving parents in children's activities." PlaySmart has addressed this concern by providing playgrounds that don't visually restrict parents from watching their children play by creating playgrounds that are easy and comfortable for adults to traverse, and by creating such a diverse array of activities that even adults are actually entertained by being in the playground.

All of the sources you used in your article predominantly use plastic tubes to create their playgrounds. But one is quoted, "We find that children want interactive play, something that moves so they can use their imaginations." In a PlaySmart playground, children can ride down the only patented automatic return Trolley Ride, they can swing across an imaginary creek in our Pool Swing, they can bounce in our Kangaroo Room, or they can ride a Rodeo Rider or a Magic Carpet. Even our patent-pending Tensioned Web floors are interactive because children can bounce on them!

Another quote, "Kids want to play in the bigger playground where they can maneuver easily," Your own Ron Kogos has seen our playgrounds. Ask him which alternative allows maneuverability, Web floors or plastic tubes?

Then there is this quote, "...parents are looking for a way to get their kids away from electronic games and into physical exercise in a fun kind of way. They look at socializing skills and interaction." How much exercise and social interaction do you get in a tube? PlaySmart's playgrounds promote exercise, social skills, and interaction more than any other alternative your subscribers have.

Another source said that his company was introducing a new type of design that can be added onto easily. PlaySmart's playgrounds, from day one, have had this capability. I submit that you have done your readers a dis-

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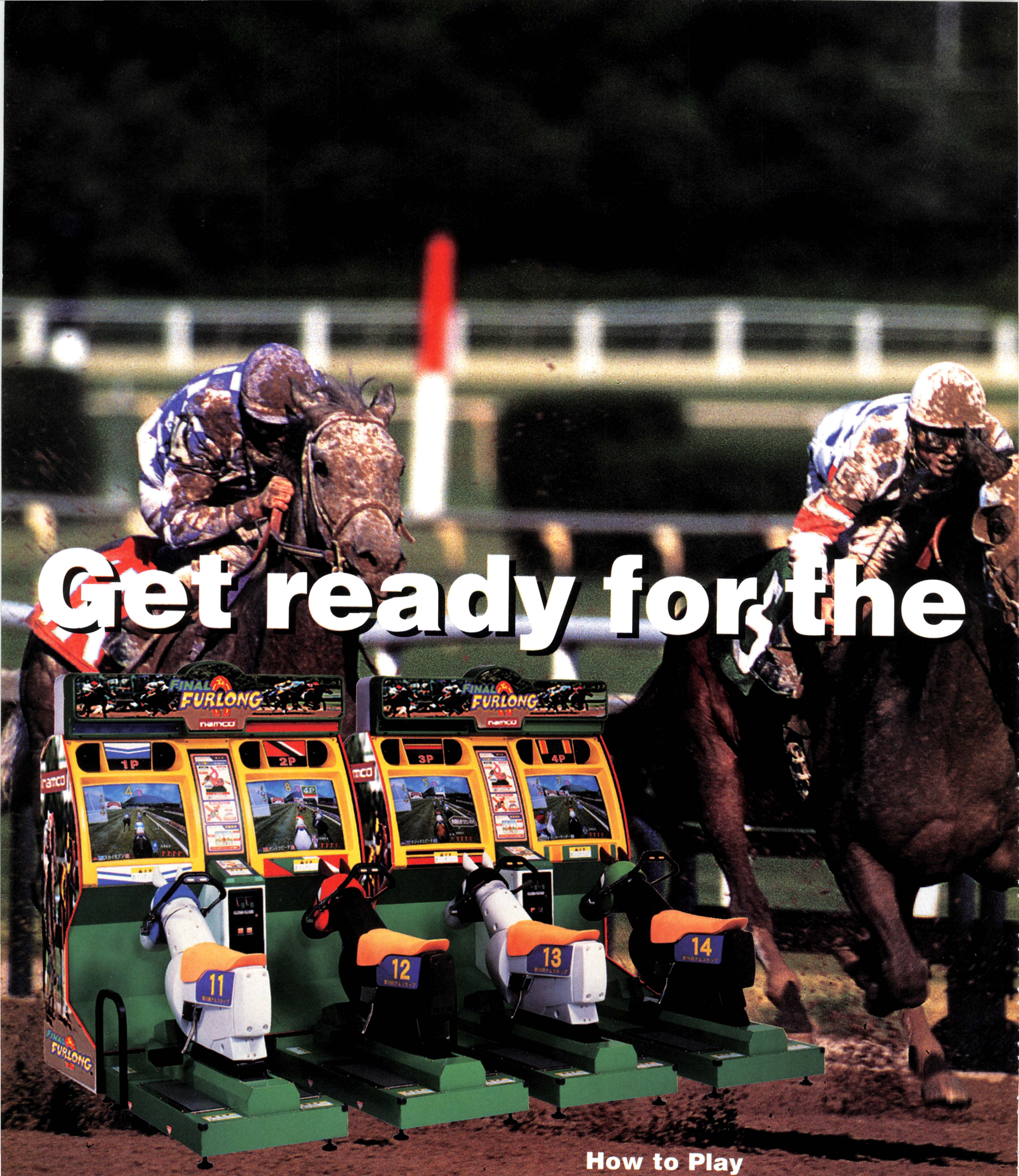
FINAL FURLONG
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1P
2P
3P
4P
11
12
13
14

How to Play

Rock your "horse" back and forth, ride at comfortable pace until you reach the "SPRINT POINT". Use your WHIP button at the "SPRINT POINT" to gain maximum speed.

2-Player Game Specifications:
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Specifications subject to change without notice.

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This horse's best pace is between the 2nd and 4th position.	The 5th and 7th position is the best pace for this horse in the first half of the race.	For you novice jockeys. This horse can keep pace in any of these previous positions.	This horse hangs back until the "sprint point" and busts loose with all its' might.

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service in providing such a lopsided perspective on what their alternatives in soft playgrounds are. You have also overlooked the one company that has been doing for years what the experts are now saying we need to do.

Darrell Weaver
President
PlaySmart
Sedalia, MO

Randy's the best

Randy Fromm's articles ("Technical Topics") are without a doubt the best and most useful part of Play Meter. Thanks for all the help over the years.

Peter Rose
Velveeta Vending
Niskayuna, NY

Editor's note: We are very proud to offer our readers Randy Fromm's exclusive articles. You can see more of him at the upcoming AMOA show where he will be conducting technical seminars. For more information, contact AMOA.

National Ticket comment

This is just a note to let you know that we are very proud to have appeared on the cover of Play Meter's July issue, considering that your publication is one of the industry's leaders. We are sure to receive excellent feedback and many new leads.

Ginger Seidel
National Ticket Co.
Shamokin, PA

Complainers not doers

Valerie Cognevich's editorial in the July issue of Play Meter echoes my thoughts, feelings, and outrage. I've heard all those pitiful excuses from operators who don't support their associations and who enjoy the benefits on the backs of their brethren. The talkers and complainers are never the doers.

She is exactly right in her assessment of the way this industry is perceived. The apathetic attitude of some of its members has contributed to that and make us ever so vulnerable to a government bloated with bureaucracies that can't manage themselves or money.

I for one welcome more editorials on this subject. Great job. ▲

Rich Holley
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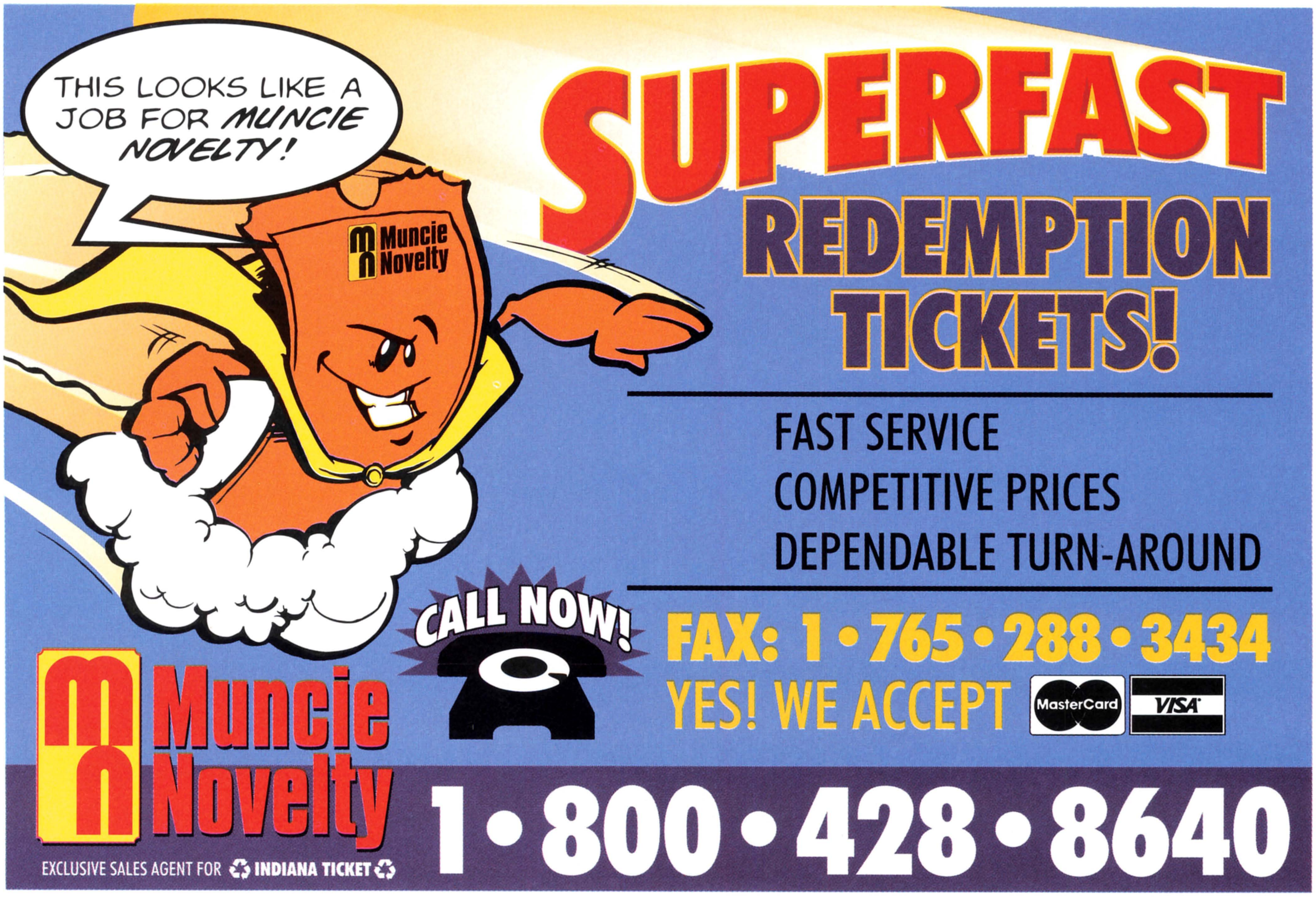
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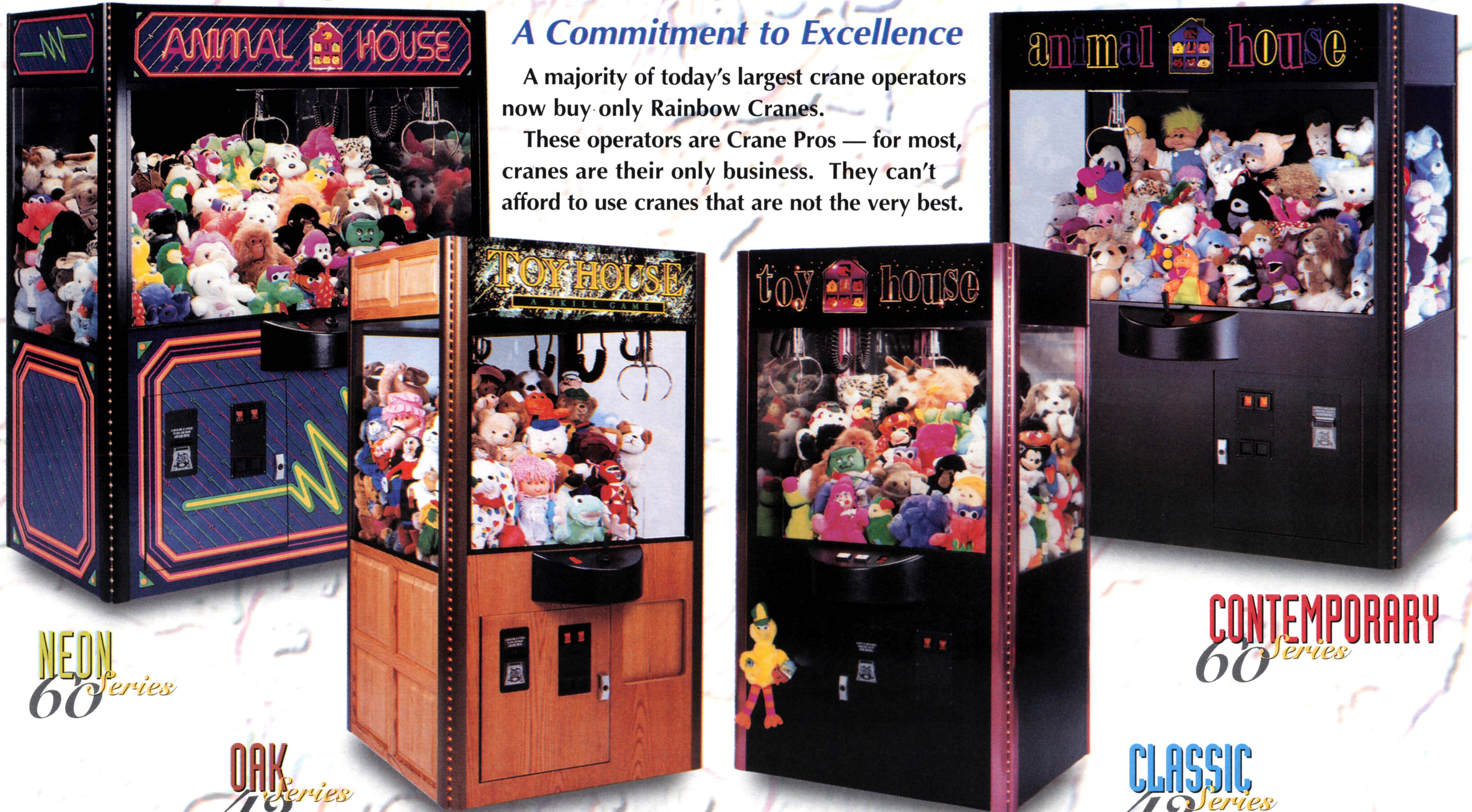
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FROM THE
EDITOR

The crossroads between the past AND future

"But man must
light for man
The fires no
other can'
And find in his
own eye
Where the strange
crossroads lie."

David McCord
(1950)

Valerie Cognevich
Editor

It was just 30 years into the new century when Noel Coward proclaimed, "I've got those weary 20th century blues." Now nearly 70 years later, I think a whole nation could shout Mr. Coward's words from the rooftops.

We're anticipating a new century with unspoken promises we only hope to see. No one living in 1900 could have imagined the wonders that would take place during the century. The awe of airplanes, automobiles, electricity, running water in every home, and telephones must have been wonders to behold. Television changed the world. I had the pleasure of knowing a gentleman about 20 years ago who was 80 at the time and a youngster at the turn of the century. His memories were sharp and he chuckled when he told us stories of the rogue he had been, streaking through town at a whopping 15 miles per hour in his new horseless carriage as the old people shrieked their disapproval and shouted that he was going way too fast!

I once saw a show about the humble beginnings of the automobile with serious then, laughable now rules. For instance, if you were traveling down a road in a car and saw a horse-drawn carriage approaching, you had to jump out, blanket the entire vehicle with some sort of cover, and wait for the horse to pass. Even more unbelievable was the rule about meeting a horse-drawn carriage at an intersection. If the horse wouldn't move past the car, the owner would have to dismantle it, let the horse pass, then reassemble it!

But the turn of the century generation couldn't possibly have imagined the inventions, or in their wildest dreams pictured the life their descendents would live. As we approach the 21st century, we're much different than the generation that crossed into the 20th century. We are prepared for anything. Trips to the moon and photos from Mars are things we accepted with grace. Cars that drive themselves along a highway sensor system seem logical for the near future.

We are eager for spectacular new inventions and innovations. The only surprise would be if they weren't right around the corner. I wonder if we can really be astonished anymore. Cloning has been depicted in dastardly fashion in past horror movies, but now it's real. But are we particularly stunned? Should it happen? Too late to ask.

And what about the Internet? We are in a frenzy expanding it beyond the boundaries of sanity. Is it the end of society as we know it? Some think so. We are being consumed by images on a screen and the mindboggling array of information we never seemed to need before. We were busy with other things like visiting our neighbors, working in our yards, or spending time with family.

The world is moving much faster and we're adapting to living in it at a hectic pace. Imaginations used to run wild, while now those crazy dreams are the reality waiting just around the corner. H.G. Wells fantasized about man going to the moon. I'm sure he was told that he had a vivid imagination. Certainly he wasn't looked upon as a realist.

Looking at the little Rover four-wheeling around the surface of Mars is somewhat surreal. And thinking of man someday doing his own exploring of the red planet seems perplexing, but I think we expect it to happen. When we saw the space station in the movie "2001: A Space Odyssey" back in 1969 who would have envisioned Space Station Mir needing repair work. "Star Trek" was the ultimate science fiction just 30 years ago. Everyone is walking around with a portable communication device now. We call them cellular phones.

Amid the stretching of our concepts of reality, we know that our industry is riding the wake of this wondrous, mysterious focus on technology. We've seen the ferocious quest for more, better, bigger, faster, and challenging. But there's a dark side to this. Well, maybe not exactly dark but certainly enigmatic. It's a potent mixture of an unsatisfied group of young people craving all the thrills they can get and wanting even more, and another group of baby boomers struggling to adapt to the status of middle age and the overwhelming onslaught of technology. Where do games really fit in their lifestyle? How is the Internet playing into their schedules?

Family entertainment centers address a demand for quality time between kids and parents, especially those who don't live together. Parents want that warm and fuzzy feeling they get when seeing their youngsters having fun, and the kids love having a place their parents are willing to take them. It's no longer enough to bake a cake and invite friends to a birthday party. Now it's a matter of what new exciting place the child wants to have his party.

I've just recently passed into my 21st year in the coin-op industry and quietly accepted the fact that I'll be eligible to join the Half Century Club in just a few short years. But seeing an industry evolve from very humble beginnings to the magic it's become has been a treat. I can't wait to see what the next 20 years will bring. But I won't be surprised at anything! ▲

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-CATHERINE FLETCHINGER

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VIDEO KITS

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Tekken 3 *(Namco)*	8.76	220
2. Golden Tee '97 *(Incred. Tech.)*	8.49	108
3. Area 51 *(Atari)*	7.95	1117
4. Police Trainer *(P&P)*	7.93	213
5. Golden Tee 3D Golf *(Incred. Tech)*	7.77	1002
6. Point Blank *(Namco)*	7.08	594
7. Die Hard Arcade *(Sega)*	7.00	374
8. World Class Bowling *(Incredible Tech.)*	6.96	307
9. Raiden Fighters *(Fabtek)*	6.96	87
10. Mace: Dark Age *(Atari)*	6.93	437
11. Tekken 2 *(Namco)*	6.91	999
12. X-Men vs. Street Fighter *(Capcom)*	6.79	285
13. Three *(Capcom)*	6.69	83
14. Tournament Solitaire *(Dynamo)*	6.67	548
15. Pang 3 *(Worldwide)*	6.40	40
16. Bust-A-Move Again *(Taito)*	6.38	474
17. Raiden DX *(Fabtek)*	6.36	346
18. Strikers 1945 *(Worldwide)*	6.34	150
19. Magical Drop III *(SNK)*	6.33	*
20. Lethal Enforcers *(Konami)*	6.21	1618
21. Bust-A-Move *(SNK)*	6.21	483
22. Vampire Savior *(Capcom)*	6.17	*
23. Viper Phase 1 *(Fabtek)*	6.13	278
24. Metal Slug *(SNK)*	6.12	418
25. 19XX *(Capcom)*	6.07	74
26. Raiden II *(Fabtek)*	5.90	785
27. Soul Edge II *(Namco)*	5.89	207
28. D&D Tower of Doom *(Capcom)*	5.88	464
29. Aero Fighters 3 *(SNK)*	5.87	65
30. Tekken *(Namco)*	5.84	791

COUNTERTOPS

1. Megatouch XL *(Merit)*	9.26	230
2. Megatouch Tournament *(Merit)*	8.50	442
3. Megatouch IV *(Merit)*	8.14	842
4. Touchmaster *(Williams)*	7.50	450
5. Magical Touch 3 *(Micro)*	7.11	42
6. Megatouch *(Merit)*	6.84	899
7. Concorde 1 *(JVL)*	6.71	126

CLASSIC VIDEOS

1. Out Run *(Sega)*	7.00	51
2. Pole Position *(Atari)*	6.43	*
3. Ms. Pac-Man *(Bally/Midway)*	6.40	*
4. Raiden *(Fabtek)*	6.31	*
5. Galaga *(Bally/Midway)*	6.11	*
6. Centipede *(Atari)*	5.71	*

VIDEO DEDICATED

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. House of the Dead *(Sega)*	9.41	120
2. Maximum Force *(Atari)*	8.35	205
3. Tourn. 3D Golf *(In. Tech.)*	8.13	290
4. Gun Blade NY *(Sega)*	7.52	558
5. Rampage World Tour *(Midway)*	7.46	75
6. Time Crisis *(Namco)*	7.46	829
7. Virtua Cop 2 *(Sega)*	7.21	819
8. Solitaire Challenge *(Dynamo)*	7.09	1354
9. Virtua Fighter 3 *(Sega)*	6.67	129
10. Killer Instinct 2 *(Midway)*	5.91	305
11. Virtua Fighter 2 *(Sega)*	5.85	930
12. Run and Gun 2 *(Konami)*	5.59	72
13. Virtual On *(Sega)*	5.50	127

VIDEO SIMULATORS

1. Top Skater *(Sega)*	9.20	58
2. Cruis'n World *(Midway)*	9.15	475
3. Sega Super GT *(Sega)*	8.88	56
4. San Francisco Rush *(Atari)*	8.67	408
5. Wave Runner *(Sega)*	8.53	271
6. Alpine Racer 2 *(Namco)*	8.32	321
7. Daytona USA *(Sega)*	8.23	2089
8. Cruis'n USA *(Midway)*	8.22	1944
9. Daytona USA Limited *(Sega)*	8.00	42
10. Tokyo Wars *(Namco)*	7.73	201
11. Alpine Racer *(Namco)*	7.70	1072
12. Alpine Surfer *(Namco)*	7.50	375
13. Home Run Derby *(ICE)*	7.33	155
14. Manx TT *(Sega)*	6.93	533
15. Suzuka 8 Hours 2 *(Namco)*	6.88	1489
16. Cyber Cycles *(Namco)*	6.83	875
17. Sega Rally *(Sega)*	6.83	752
18. OutRunners *(Sega)*	6.80	1759
19. Ridge Racer 2 *(Namco)*	6.64	468
20. Lucky & Wild *(Namco)*	6.61	1346
21. Indy 500 Twin *(Sega)*	6.48	473
22. Prop Cycle *(Namco)*	6.37	140
23. COPS *(Atari)*	6.20	610

PINBALLS

1. Scared Stiff *(Bally)*	8.39	482
2. Attack From Mars *(Bally)*	8.11	843
3. Junk Yard *(Williams)*	7.52	236
4. The Addams Family *(Bally)*	7.50	3304
5. Theatre of Magic *(Bally)*	7.44	1171
6. Arabian Nights *(Williams)*	7.43	456
7. Fast Break *(Bally)*	7.30	48
8. Star Trek: TNG *(Williams)*	7.20	1688
9. The Lost World *(Sega)*	7.08	21
10. Star Wars Trilogy *(Sega)*	6.88	127
11. World Cup Soccer *(Bally)*	6.63	1055
12. Space Jam *(Sega)*	6.42	130
13. Road Show *(Williams)*	6.37	725
14. Twilight Zone *(Bally)*	6.15	1129
15. Jack-Bot *(Williams)*	6.05	137

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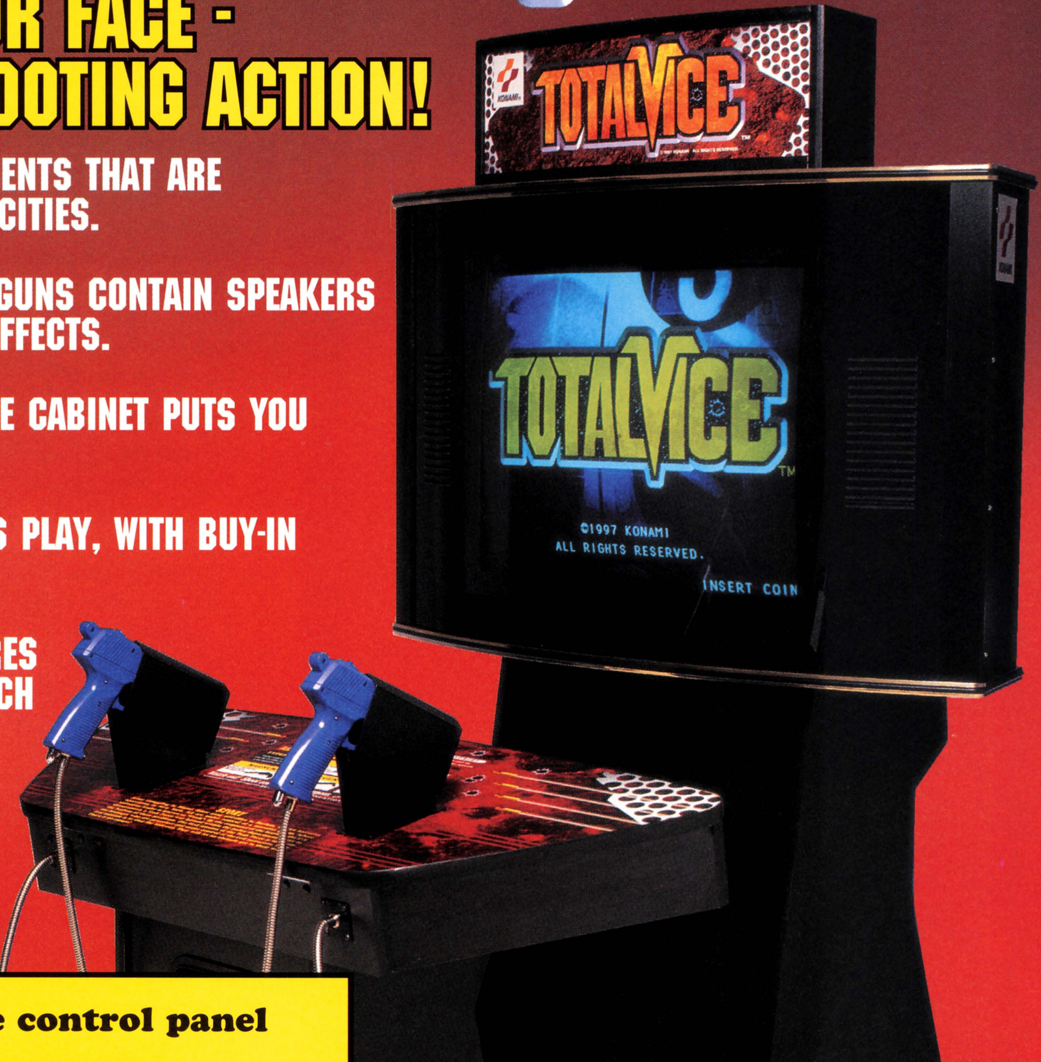
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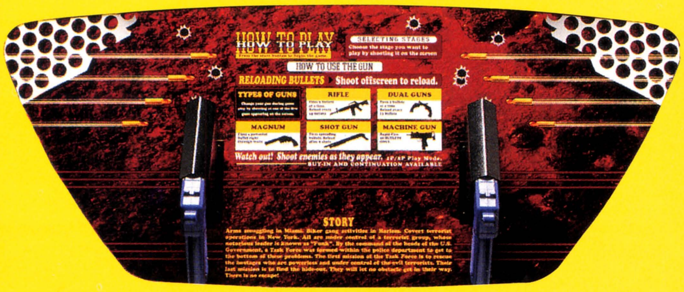
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Choose the stage you want to play by shooting it on the screen
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REDEMPTION

ALLEY BOWLERS

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Skee-Ball Too! *(Skee-Ball)*	8.43	301
2. Skee-Ball Lightning *(Skee-Ball)*	7.82	817
3. ICE Ball *(ICE)*	7.60	470
4. Smartball *(Smart)*	7.38	238
5. Skee-Ball *(Skee-Ball)*	7.20	596

SPORTS GAMES

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Full Court Fever *(ICE)*	7.67	569
2. Hoop It Up *(Atari)*	7.67	841
3. Hoop Shot *(ICE)*	7.60	155
4. Full Court Frenzy *(ICE)*	7.13	348
5. Arm Champs *(Jaleco)*	7.00	214
6. Super Shot *(Skee-Ball)*	7.00	536
7. Shoot to Win *(Smart)*	6.92	473
8. Slugfest *(Williams)*	5.79	5
9. UB-QB Football *(Skee-Ball)*	5.69	112
10. Championship Basketball *(Grayhound)*	5.40	91
11. Putting Challenge II *(G.L. Tech.)*	5.14	51

SINGLE CRANES

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Rainbow *(Rainbow)*	9.27	693
2. Action Claw *(Fun Merchants)*	8.14	598
3. Jumbo Crane *(Grayhound)*	8.00	597
4. Clean Sweep *(Smart)*	7.32	760
5. Big Choice *(Fun Merchants)*	7.20	574
6. Skill Crane *(Grayhound)*	7.06	330
7. Candy Crane *(Smart)*	6.80	402
8. Classic Watch Crane *(Smart)*	6.58	524
9. Candy Man *(Fun Merchants)*	6.50	192
10. Hollywood Crane *(Maxwell)*	6.45	85

CHILD-SIZE GAMES

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Smart Toss Em *(Smart)*	6.67	449
2. Hightops *(Skee-Ball)*	6.63	60
3. Feed Big Bertha *(Smart)*	6.50	269
4. Shoot To Win! Jr. *(Smart)*	6.50	528
5. Awesome Toss 'Em *(Lazer-Tron)*	6.29	119
6. Toss Em *(UETD)*	6.14	185
7. Skee-Toss B.C. *(Skee-Ball)*	6.07	6
8. Barnyard Babies *(Skee-Ball)*	5.67	37
9. Jr. All American *(UETD)*	5.57	55
10. Bozo Basketball *(Design Plus)*	5.50	60
11. The Flintstones *(ICE)*	5.50	83

ROLL DOWNS

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Jungle Rama *(Lazer-Tron)*	7.67	261
2. Spin To Win *(Lazer-Tron)*	7.67	672
3. Roll Down *(Bay Tek)*	6.67	82
4. Quackers *(Seidel)*	5.43	52
5. Clown Roll Down *(Bay Tek)*	5.27	156
6. Jungle Picnic *(Bay Tek)*	5.20	*

NOVELTY

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Surfin' Safari *(5 Star)*	9.38	60
2. Cyclone *(ICE)*	9.19	1222
3. Cyclone Jr. *(ICE)*	8.67	563
4. Treasure Falls *(Planet Earth)*	8.63	564
5. Prize Zone *(Lazer-Tron)*	8.57	54
6. Colorama *(Bromley)*	8.33	848
7. Dinoscore *(Planet Earth)*	7.84	1038
8. Solar Spin *(Lazer-Tron)*	7.80	356
9. Pirate's Revenge *(5 Star)*	7.71	42
10. Round 'n Round *(Astro)*	7.33	656
11. Buddy Bear *(Smart)*	6.60	167
12. Steer Crazy *(Fun Industries)*	6.33	65
13. Pop-A-Ball *(Coastal)*	6.20	84
14. Shot Clock 2 *(Astro)*	6.20	85
15. Hop-A-Tic-Tac-Toe *(Data East)*	5.95	34
16. Simple Simon *(Am. Sammy)*	5.91	90
17. Cosmo Gang *(Data East)*	5.89	2
18. Flip N Win *(Planet Earth)*	5.80	341
19. Killer T-Rex *(Smart)*	5.80	169
20. Dump the Ump *(ICE)*	5.69	78
21. Pop-A-Tac-Toe *(Coastal)*	5.67	46
22. Sidewinder *(Bob's Space)*	5.40	*
23. Hungry Hungry Hippos *(ICE)*	5.36	25
24. Magic Mr. X *(Am. Sammy)*	5.29	37
25. Pop-A-Slot *(Coastal)*	5.22	302

COIN DROP GAMES

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Big Haul *(Benchmark)*	8.64	522
2. Smokin' Token *(Seidel)*	8.14	993
3. Goin' Rollin' *(Seidel)*	8.00	725
4. Wheel 'M In *(Bromley)*	7.79	955
5. Wheel of Fortune *(Fun House)*	7.45	388
6. Rock-N-Bowl *(Bromley)*	7.32	408
7. The Mask *(Data East)*	7.29	625
8. Sega Sports *(Sega)*	7.20	191
9. Super Wheel 'Em In *(Bromley)*	6.88	150
10. Super Bank It II *(Lazer-Tron)*	6.83	172
11. Cut the Cheese *(Sega)*	6.80	455
12. Roll For Gold *(Benchmark)*	6.80	337
13. Pirate's Gold *(Lazer-Tron)*	6.44	217
14. Aftershock *(Lazer-Tron)*	6.43	454

GUN GAMES

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Water Game *(Bob's Space)*	7.22	164
2. Knock-Down *(Meltec)*	6.71	95
3. Big Mouth *(Meltec)*	6.56	111
4. Miner's Revenge *(Lazer-Tron)*	6.17	155

BOPPING/STOMPING GAMES

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Spider Stompin *(Jaleco)*	8.12	812
2. Tortoise & The Hare *(Island)*	7.60	204
3. Ribbit Racin *(Lazer-Tron)*	7.22	671
4. Cracky Crab *(Namco)*	6.86	147
5. Wacky Gator *(Data East)*	6.81	313
6. Robo-Bop *(Coastal)*	6.60	83
7. Swamp Stomp *(Lazer-Tron)*	6.56	457

Results are based on monthly Equipment Poll ballot returns. Point Value = average of ballot ratings on a scale of 1-10; Longevity Points = standings on Best 60 combined game lists (#1 game receives 60 points, #2 game receives 59 points, etc.) **Indicates new or reappearing games.*

QUESTION OF THE MONTH:
What is your most popular merchandise item?

OPERATORS' CHOICE: #1—Bean Bag Babies, #2—Plush, #3—Candy, #4—Aliens and Jewelry (tie).

Press Release

American Changer introduces it's FREE PLAY coupon.

A promotional tool with applications for everything from the largest F.E.C. to small game rooms at the local hotel.

You can now set your American Changer to accept your personalized **FREE-PLAY** coupon and give out the same number of tokens as if the customer would have inserted a $1.00 bill.

If you are giving 4 tokens per dollar, when your personalized **FREE-PLAY** coupon is inserted your customer will recieve 4 tokens as if he had inserted a $1.00 bill. Likewise if you have your American Changer set to dispense 6 tokens per dollar accepted your American Changer will give 6 tokens if a **FREE-PLAY** coupon is inserted.

For those large F.E.C. with special promotions you can have a dedicated American Changer that accepts **FREE-PLAY** coupons only and for every **FREE-PLAY** coupon accepted you can preset the changer to give out up to 31 tokens.

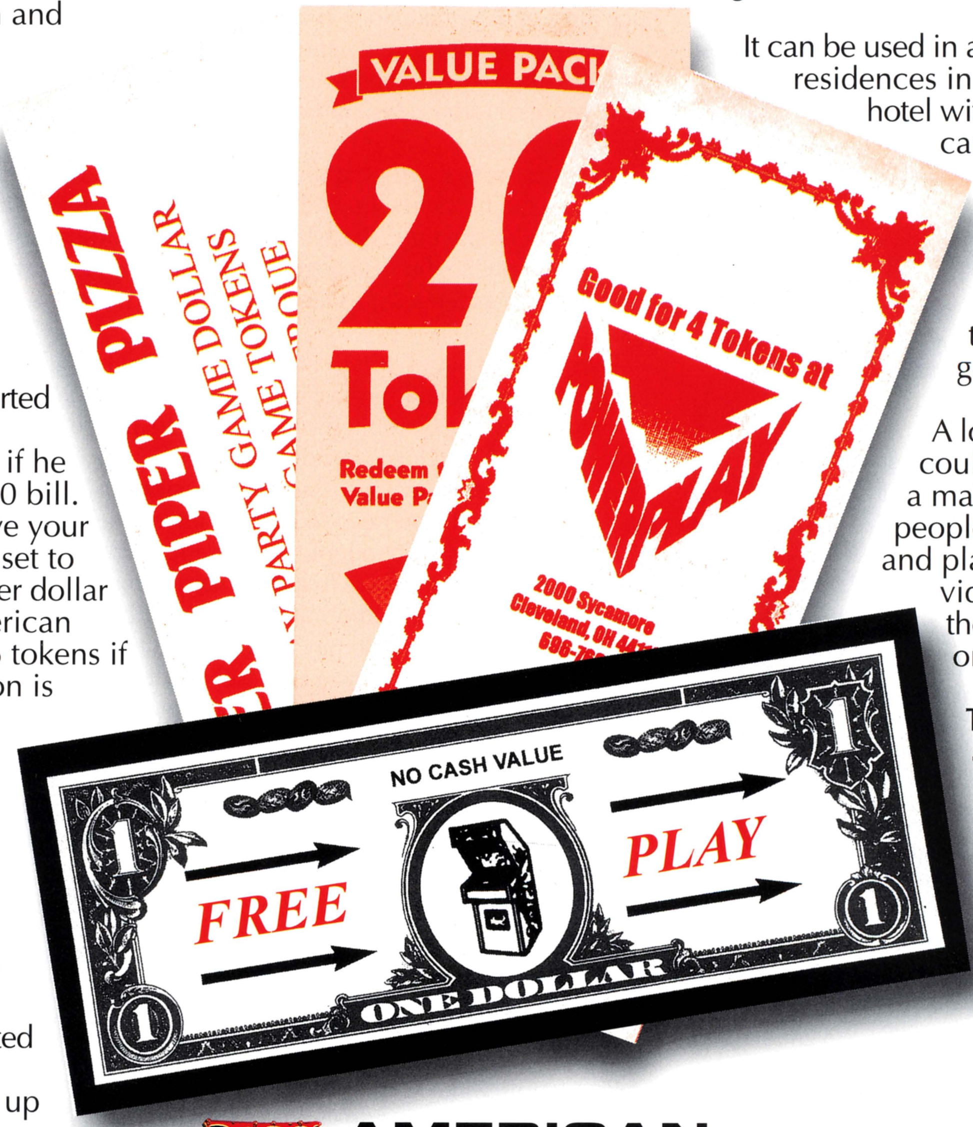
What a great promotional tool.

If you have a large group coming in for a birthday party you can give them one or two **FREE-PLAY** coupons as part of the promotional package to get them started.

It can be used in a mailer to local residences in your area. A hotel with a game room can give one free play coupon to every child in the family as an incentive to get them to the game room.

A local pizza shop could use them in a mailer to get people to come in and play one of the video games as they wait for their order.

The possibilities are endless...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UP FRONT

No easy answers to COMPLEX questions

The e-mail box recently turned up this inquiry: "I'm a business major in college. I've always loved arcades and think that it might be a cool business to own. I was just curious to know if there is a particular franchise one can buy into or something of that nature. Every manager of an arcade I've talked to says their location is corporately owned. Is there a nationwide vendor of games? Any helpful hints on startup?"

We try to be helpful yet realistic. This is the reply:

There are a number of arcade chains around the country, but in our experience most of the stand-alone arcades (those with mainly videos and pinballs) are not chain operations. Family entertainment centers (with miniature golf, go-karts, bumper cars, batting cages, laser tag, snack bars or full-blown restaurants, large game rooms, kiddie rides, and other attractions) can be individually-owned or chain operations.

No matter which end, stand-alone location or multiple attraction facility, the business is harder than it looks. People see the crowds on the weekend and think it is like that all the time. But what happens on Tuesday afternoon? It's not just a matter of emptying the cash boxes. Games are expensive, real estate is expensive, and staff such as technicians and well-trained courteous attendants must be the best.

There are a host of other considerations: building leases, adequate parking and lighting, signs, and most of all—good traffic into your location. You can have the most beautiful place, but if you are hard to find you will be doomed. The public is notoriously fickle, demanding new, new, new, so reinvestment in the latest technology must be factored into your business plan. Once the newness of the place has worn off, you need to get customers back, which usually requires promotions. Plus, you have to look at the competition around you. Don't forget demographic studies. You have to know your audience. This is just for starters.

On the flip side, it is a fun business, never dull, and the rewards are there for those who are not afraid to pay their dues in time, energy, and financial investment. If you are really serious I suggest you attend a major trade show where you can go to seminars, see equipment, get a handle on the commitment required, and talk to operators who have toiled in the field of coin-op entertainment for a lifetime. The kind of information you can gather from this type of networking is invaluable. The fall trade show calendar is full of choices: Fun Expo in Las Vegas in September, AMOA International Expo in October in Atlanta, and IAAPA in November in Orlando.

I also suggest you contact local distributors and talk to them. We are happy to supply all the data you need. Many distributors not only sell games to operators but also operate games on routes consisting of local taverns, retail and convenience stores, hotels, and similar locations.

Before jumping in with your own place, think about working in an arcade, family entertainment center, or distributorship to learn the business from the ground up.

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Good luck! ▲

Bonnie Theard
Managing Editor

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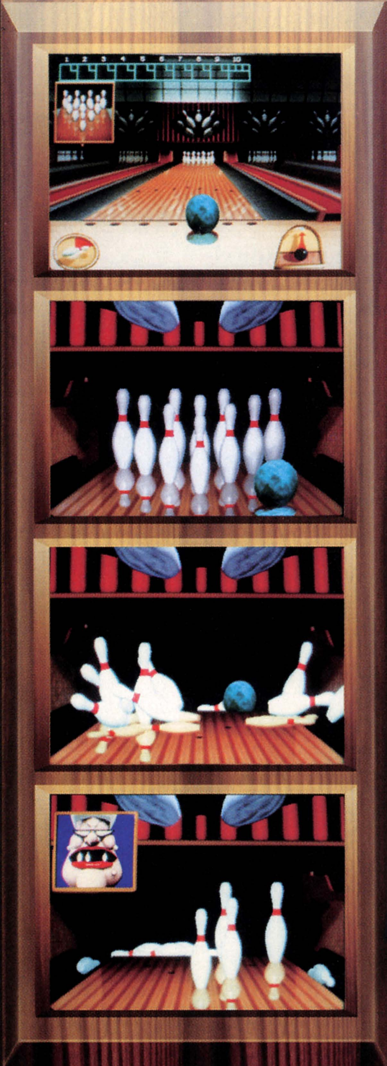

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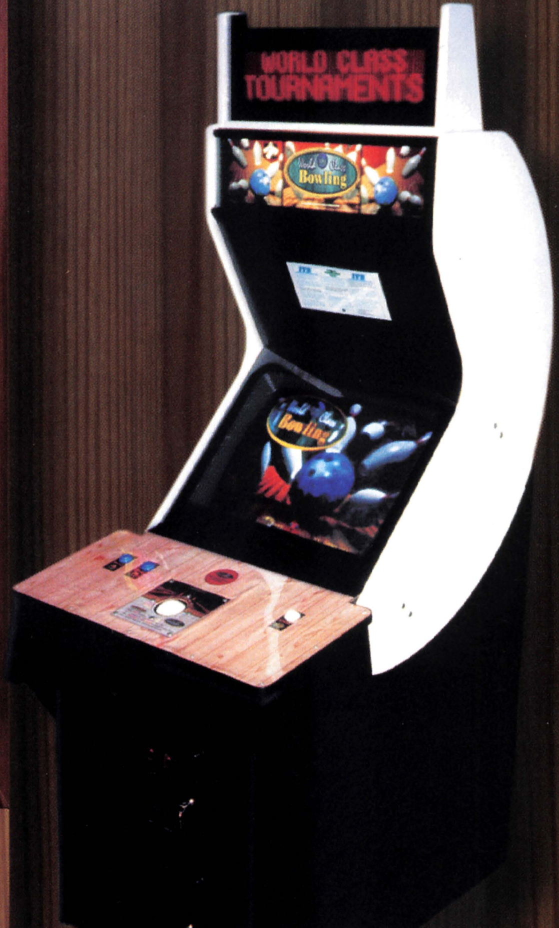


Cabinet Dimensions
84" H x 27 3/4" W x 42 1/2" D

COIN-OP NEWS

DISTRIBUTION 2000:

planning our futures together

Williams Bally/Midway packed a lot into two short days Aug. 13-14 in Chicago at its pre-Fun Expo, AMOA, and IAAPA product showing. It featured its latest games, discussed the spin-off of Midway, and did a lot of listening to its distributors.

The distributor list was extensive and included foreign representatives from Germany, South Africa, Argentina, Spain, Canada, England, Switzerland, India, France, and Australia. Williams Bally/Midway fashioned a unique event which gave distributors an opportunity to "put in their two-cents worth" so to speak. After the general product introduction and a presentation on special projects, the distributors were divided into small groups to discuss such topics as the future, the Internet, pinball and video game design to name a few.

THE PRODUCT

Of course, a highlight of the presentation was the new product, *Mortal Kombat 4, Off Road Challenge,* and *Medieval Madness.* If you don't think *Mortal Kombat 4* generates a following, listen to this: during its Road Tour promoting the game, the company registered 500,000 hits on its Web site for more information! Many wanted to know when the game would be out for the home. Distributors were curious about that also. Here's the skinny: the company assured them that there were no such plans in the works right now and if it did come out for the home it wouldn't be for at least eight to10 months.

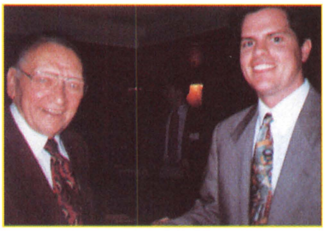
The game features the Zeus chip that delivers 1,250,000 polygons. By way of comparison this is about 10 times that of the Nintendo 64. The Zeus chip was designed for extraordinary performance, but at a lower cost than you might expect. According to the company, everything on *Mortal Kombat 4* has been changed, from the weapons to the speed.

A special tour, simply called Road Tour, took the *Mortal Kombat 4* truck to a variety of cities like Baltimore, San Jose, Vancouver, Boston, San Francisco, Dallas, Newark, St. Louis, and Chicago. In virtually every city the local news carried segments on the tour, talking with players who stood in lengthy lines for their turns and offered comments like these: "It really kicks butt," "Impressive," "Love it," "Great," "It's hot," and "It's the mother of all fighting games!" Christa Voss of Williams Bally/Midway said she "was amazed at the publicity. Kids literally followed the truck!" Said a company representative, "It's hard to make an impression on so many people, but we did it with our Road Tour."

Off Road Challenge was developed by the company's San Diego office, headed by John Rowe, who was with Leland Corp. when *Off Road* was a mega hit. *Off Road Challenge* invites players to get off the highways and into the rough with a variety of vehicles, like the popular dune buggy, and experience a racing adventure.

Salesperson Lenore Sayers with New Orleans Novelty's Mark Boasberg (l) and Roberto Wang of Criatura in Argentina.

Southgate's John Gatens (l) eagerly chooses an envelope for a chance to win $1,000. Joe Dillon and his assistant look on.



Steve Kordek (l) congratulates Brian Eddy, head of the design team on *Medieval Madness,* on a job well done.

From left: Williams Bally/Midway's Steve Kordek, Roger Sharpe, Jim Patla, and Larry DeMar.

Betson's Joe Cirillo ready to enjoy a good cigar.

Ira Bettelman (l) of C.A. Robinson joins Mr. and Mrs. Rubin Piha and Mr. and Mrs. Morris Piha of Greater Southern.

John Rowe, head of the design team for *Off Road Challenge* (l), listens to comments from Australia's Malcolm Steinberg.

Brian Eddy was head of the design team on the latest pinball, *Medieval Madness,* as well as the previous *Attack from Mars. Medieval Madness* takes the player to a bygone time with a playfield featuring a full-scale articulated castle and moat. (See "What's New" for a detailed description.)

Countertop games have attracted a healthy following and the *Touchmaster* is poised to be a fierce competitor. Distributors expressed their skepticism about the level of support from the company, noting that a countertop must have con-

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DISTRIBUTION 2000

continued from page 22

stant updates to be successful. Williams assured distributors that its level of commitment is deep, explaining that the company plans updates and even a cabinet revision.

AWARDS

At its awards banquet held aboard the Odyssey II, docked at the new city attraction, The Navy Pier, Williams Bally/Midway recognized outstanding distributors, both foreign and domestic, in the following categories: Highest Domestic Sales Volume (Williams: Betson; Bally: Cleveland Coin; and Midway: Betson); Highest Percent of Increase (Williams: Lieberman, Bally: Moss Distributing; and Midway: Warehouse of Games); Highest Sales Volume Per One Million Population (Williams: American Vending; Bally: Southgate; and Midway: Starburst Coin); and the Highest Sales on Touchmaster (Sunbelt). Foreign distributors were also recognized: Nova Games, UniMax, Seeben, Aragotto, Kunik Group, Bally Wulff, and Sin Jin.

In a tribute to an outstanding salesman, Williams Bally/Midway presented a special award to Jean Coutu of Laniel Automatic Machines in Canada, who passed away just prior to the meeting. "Jean was an outstanding salesman as well as an outstanding person. He will be greatly missed," noted Williams Bally/Midway's Joe Dillon.

THE SPIN-OFF

Distributors were notedly concerned about the recent announcement of WMS Industries' spin off of its nearly 34 million shares of Midway Games. The company explained that the spin off is due in part to Midway's desire to grow its business through acquisitions. The company also believes that the spin off will reduce regulatory burdens by separating ownership of Midway's business from WMS' gaming device business. The company assured distributors that the spin off will be positive and the quality and reputation will remain intact. The spin off will be complete by early 1998.

Atari announces *Maximum Force* kit, player sweepstakes

Atari Games recently announced the long-awaited release of the universal kit version of its popular video, *Maximum Force*, which became available during the first week of this month for any standard resolution JAMMA-compatible cabinet.

A precision-based shooting game, *Maximum Force* offers 30 minutes of game play including secret rooms. The kit contains everything an operator needs to easily convert JAMMA-compatible cabinets: a pre-mounted PCB/hard drive tray, guns, cables, holsters, buttons and harnesses, decals, and Lexan overlay.

"The *Maximum Force* kit is priced affordably for the street, offering unmatched performance for the price," extolled Mike Taylor, vice president of sales for Atari. "*Maximum Force* is a perfect piece for bowling alleys, bars, pizza parlors, movie theaters, and other venues where people are looking for entertainment."

Atari Games recently announced the long-awaited release of the universal kit version of its popular video, *Maximum Force*, which became available during the first week of this month.

Coinciding with the release, Atari is launching Maximum Cool, a player sweepstakes designed around the many secret rooms in the game. The exciting prize list includes a grand prize of $5,000 cash and the chance to become a character in an upcoming Atari game.

Entering the sweepstakes is simple: players answer eight questions on the pre-printed entry blank and mail it back to Atari. Promotional materials include posters and entry forms which will ship with each universal kit. Operators who purchased dedicated versions of the game may pick up contest materials at their authorized Atari dealership.

"The contest poster gives valuable clues needed to answer all questions, which encourages players to explore and have fun," said marketing vice president Mary Fujihara. "This will result in greater earnings, as more players become familiar with the secret rooms."

Players can also enter the sweepstakes through Atari's Web site (http://www.atarigames.com) or by e-mail (maxforce@agames.com). The contest runs until March 1998 and is open to United States residents except those in Alaska, Hawaii, and Rhode Island.

In other Atari news, the company recently noted the appearance of several secret characters in the Medieval fighting game *Mace: The Dark Age*, which is generating considerable player attention. The game contains four time-release characters as well as two secret characters that are selectable if the player knows the right code.

The time-release characters include Sir Dregan, an undead Crusader searching for his soul; the Hellknight, a fiendish soldier sent to retrieve the Mace; Gar the War Mech, an amazing ball machine; and Ichiro, the evil samurai. They bring the total number of player-selectable characters to 16.

While some of the dedicated 25-inch units may not have the correct software to allow the time-release characters to pop out, Atari has made available to distributors an EPROM which repairs this bug. The company is also offering its support for any operators who want to promote a *Mace* tournament by posting the information on the World Wide Web and providing a prize package with custom *Mace* T-shirts. For more information, contact Atari, (408)434-3700; (408)232-3206 for Asia and South America; (44) 181 3246000 for Europe.

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RSA acquires new logo and goes international

The Roller Skating Associations (RSA) has acquired a new logo and added international to its name. The RSA Board of Directors voted on these alterations at the association's preconvention board meeting earlier this summer.

An Indianapolis design firm developed the new logo, with assistance from the RSA Board of Directors and staff, after studying the industry and current equipment. "This logo more accurately reflects the changes in our industry," said RSA executive director Katherine McDonnel. "Our industry is exciting and on the move. Moreover, we have both quad and inline skates in skating centers, so we can no longer show just one type of skate. That's why we opted to show only wheels in the logo."

Because the RSA's international and overseas membership has grown in recent years, the board also agreed to alter the group's name. International has been added to the end of the name, and the *s* has been dropped off associations.

RSA International is co-sponsoring the annual National Roller Skating Month in October. RSA members, as well as nonmember skating centers, manufacturers, and suppliers are encouraged to participate in the event being called The Magic of Roller Fun. For more information, call (317)875-3390.

Wurlitzer 1015 on display at museum

The jukebox that made an indelible mark on the music industry, the Wurlitzer model *1015*, is currently on display at the Patent and Trademark Museum Exhibit "Three Part Harmony: Patents, Trademarks, and Copyrights in a Musical World" in Arlington, Va.

Beginning with Thomas Edison's invention of the phonograph in 1878 and moving through the 20th century, the exhibit features items from popular musical eras and runs through December.

The Wurlitzer *1015*, an icon of the 1940s and 1950s has also been honored with the recent issuance of a U.S. Postage stamp. The jukebox was introduced in 1946, sold over 56,000 units in its first year, and became a symbol of good times and entertainment.

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AMOA board helps Give Kids the World!

Board members and past presidents of the Amusement and Music Operators Association have raised $3,950 to help maintain the games at the Fe Fi Fo Fum Arcade in the Give Kids the World Village.

Give Kids the World is a non-profit organization in Kissimmee, Fla. Each year children with terminal illnesses and their families are provided with a no-cost, top-notch, six-day vacation. Guests stay at the village in one of the 56 two-bedroom villas.

The arcade was started by the efforts of Florida operator Bill Miller and his wife Jackie. Bill solicited donations as well as giving his own equipment to help entertain the children in this free play arcade. Following Miller's retirement, the games are being maintained by his son Terry.

In the past, funding for this room has been primarily through donations from manufacturers, some state associations, and some individual operators. This year AMOA officers again supported the project in kind, but were faced with budget constraints. Although Terry's budget requests were modest, alternate fund-raising was needed.

"In a spirit of giving, the hat was passed around the room during our board meeting," reported AMOA board member Glenn Anderson. "Board members attend annual meetings at their own expense. Even in these tough times they reached into their pockets to help this great cause. Past presidents were contacted and they also contributed. A total of 25 members participated. Congratulations to them all!

If you would like to participate in this cause, please make a check out to "Terry Miller". A donation of $200 is suggested by AMOA. All donations of any amount are appreciated. Please forward your checks to Anderson, Microworlds Inc., 99-870 Iwaena Street, Aiea, HI 96701.

High-tech LBE trend chronicled by *Times*

Will the intense investment recently seen in high-tech game centers such as GameWorks and Dave & Buster's be justified by a resultant rise in players and earnings for the operators of the facilities? That was just one of the questions recently asked by *The New York Times.*

The article looked at GameWorks, as well as several other Seattle area locations–Entros and Wizards–to gain insight into the current location-based entertainment trends, noting that each of the big players is striving for the perfect mix to lure patrons out of their homes and quarters out of their pockets.

"What we're doing and what everyone else is experimenting with is ‘What does it take to get people out of the house to spend time with other people,'" Wizards operations manager Douglas Ferguson told the paper. "What is a the right mix? In a sense, this is an R & D project."

But a principal multimedia analyst at Dataquest, Ralph Rogers, questioned whether the investment was warranted. "If you take a look at just how many quarters get dropped, it's difficult for me to see how they'll justify the size and expense of setting up these centers on a dollar basis," Rogers told *The Times.*

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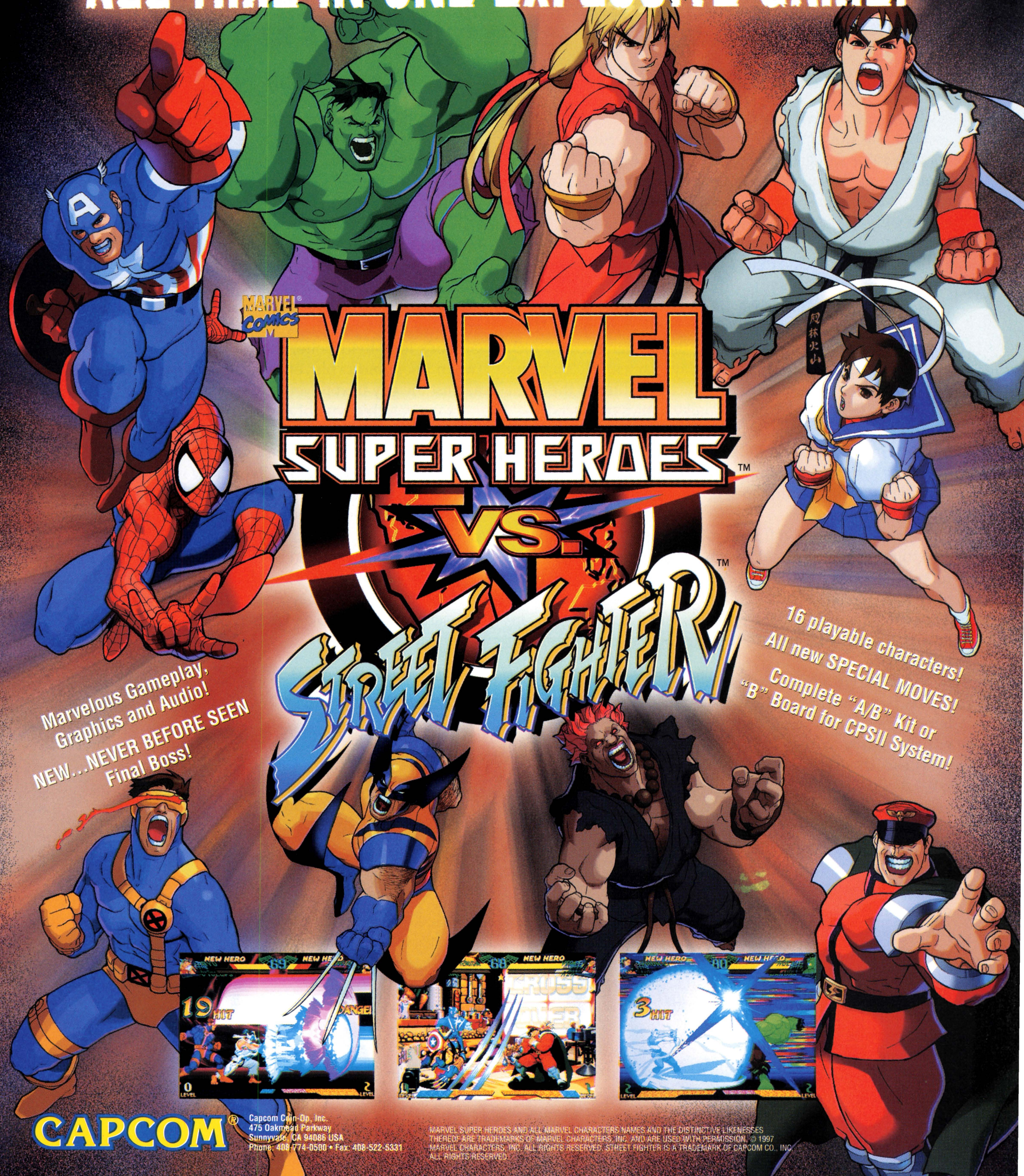
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A meeting with Microsoft

Amusement Consultants' Michael Getlan talks turkey about PC games

"It was a very cool experience!"

That was how *Play Meter* contributing writer and New York operator and game center consultant Michael Getlan of Amusement Consultants summed up a recent visit to Redmond, Wash., and software giant Microsoft, which is forging ahead with plans for Windows-based arcade games.

"It was also one of my most educational experiences," Getlan continued. "One thing I learned, I've got to go out and buy some computer games."

Getlan went out of his way to praise his host, Microsoft's Jason Robar, who is heading up the coin-op initiative. "He's my kind of guy," Getlan said, noting that Robar has a 39-inch monitor in his office on which he plays games. "He's a game player and I have a lot more comfort with him as the front man. He is dedicated to seeing quality games produced."

Robar told Getlan that Microsoft continues to be committed to bring to market a PC-game platform that utilizes its operating system. This concept of the public PC will provide a model in which a number of different companies can participate, he said.

When asked about differing roles played by Microsoft and computer chip maker Intel, which has been more public in its support of the PC platform in recent months, Robar said that Microsoft is looking for broad adoption of its software as the platform for arcade games. Intel has said it is looking for opportunities to demonstrate the capabilities of its high-end processors.

"Intel's approach is deep but narrow," Robar told Getlan. "Microsoft's is broad but not necessarily as deep."

These theoretical questions aside, Getlan said his visit to Microsoft and several high-tech entertainment centers in the area confirms to him that PC-based games will be able to thrive in the arcade market ultimately. But the release of successful games may still be more than a few months away.

"It's more than going to happen," said Getlan, who may provide services in preparing games for the coin-op market. "I saw some games that are very close."

One of the locations he visited also helped sway Getlan, who has long been skeptical of networked play, on the question of head-to-head remote competition. The location in Lynnwood, Wash., is called The Other Side and features high-end themed entertainment software experiences. For instance, Getlan participated in a game called War Birds that replicates twin prop plane combat through motion simulation and head-to-head competition against players both on-location and logged in through the Internet.

Getlan said The Other Side has created a community of players who compete against each other on a regular basis and have developed distinct identities. This runs counter to Getlan's long-held belief that networked competition between anonymous players pales in comparison to playing against the guy next to you in the arcade.

However, this type of game experience, which is played out over a longer period of time, requires a much steeper learning curve on the part of the player than the traditional arcade game which has to deliver fairly instantaneous entertainment value. Such games—which may constitute a new class of attractions, according to Getlan—will require the development of new business models and pricing structures not unlike that being explored by locations like The Other Side.

"I believe that networking has its point," Getlan added. "At The Other Side, they are on the cutting edge in using software to bring people together."

Fun centers open near Atlanta and Chicago

The month of July saw the opening of two major fun centers: one near Atlanta, Ga., and the other just outside of Chicago, Ill.

Jeepers—the newest of the company's indoor, animated theme parks and restaurants located next to a movie cinema in Norridge, Ill.,—celebrated its grand opening July 31 with fresh-baked Pizza Hut pizza from its on-location Rhino Diner.

Patrons explored the location's Jeepers, Creepers soft playground and got a chance to take a spin on the Python Pit Roller Coaster, J.J.'s Driving School Bumper Cars, the Banana Squadron Flying Bananas, and the Yak Attack Himalaya.

RW GoodTimes—a 55,000-square-foot, high-tech fun center packed with more than $1 million in electronic games, attractions, and activities, all accented by a top-notch restaurant, party rooms, and largest bar in the South—got the party going on July 18 with a gala grand opening.

Located in Norcross, Ga., the location offers 175 games and activities including virtual skiing and baseball, driving and rocket simulators, a classic arcade with videos and redemption, billiards, dart lanes, and a soda bar for children.

The location is also using a special GoodTimes Card or debit card system for paying for both amusement activities and food. The 300-seat restaurant serves contemporary American dishes in two dining rooms and a full-service bar can accommodate nearly 150 thirsty patrons

"We plan to be the destination in the region for exciting, memorable times you will be able to experience nowhere else," said general manager Scott Angione. "We've got some GoodTimes in store for everyone—the kind you don't forget."

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CashCode appoints Cointrol as the United States distributor

CashCode, the Canadian-based bill validator manufacturer, has contracted with California-based Cointrol Equipment Corp. to distribute its products in the United States. The agreement is part of CashCode's continuing expansion into the United States domestic market.

"We're very pleased to be doing business with a company with the experience and distribution system that Cointrol offered us," said CashCode's senior vice president of sales and marketing Val Levitan. "We're looking forward to a very beneficial relationship."

Cointrol will oversee distribution for CashCode's product line, which relies on technology that includes patented, non-contact magnetic sensing (a security feature that rejects counterfeits), beltless transportation system that discourages jamming, an easily accessible clam shell design that is easily maintained without tools, and optional locking cassettes for improved security. For more information, call (702)794-0405.

Sega Sensations

Sega Pinball (top) recently received *Coin Slot* magazine's award honoring *Independence Day* as the best pinball (top). Pictured (l-r) are the company's Jim Gorman, Joe Kaminkow, Jolly Backer, Rob Hurtado, Neil Falconer, and Gary Stern. Kaminkow (bottom) was also recently honored along with his wife Kim by the Starlight Children's Foundation and the group's executive director Laura Thrall (r). The event raised over $200,000 for the foundation which organizes a wish program and hospital-based service benefiting seriously and terminally ill children.

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Play Meter's Randy Fromm opens online trading post

Randy Fromm, exclusive technical writer for *Play Meter*, recently announced the formation of new services on his industry megasite on the World Wide Web. They are BuyStuff@randyfromm.com and GamesTrader.com.

The first is a free service for distributors and operators (looking to sell used equipment), who can join by filling out a form. "This puts them on the mailing list," Fromm explained. "When I get a request for games or other coin-op equipment, the inquiry is then forwarded to all members of the network."

The flip side to this service is GamesTrader.com, where distributors and operators can list any or all equipment they have to sell. All of the entries are added to an online database that is searchable by game title and/or location. A charge for listing games will be based on a sliding scale; the more equipment listed, the less expensive it is per listing. The listings will remain active for 45 days. All new members receive five free listings

For more information, contact Randy Fromm, 1944 Falmouth Dr., El Cajon, CA 92020; (619)593-6131; fax (619)593-6132; e-mail (randy@randyfromm.com); Web sites (http://www.randyfromm.com) or (http://GamesTrader.com).

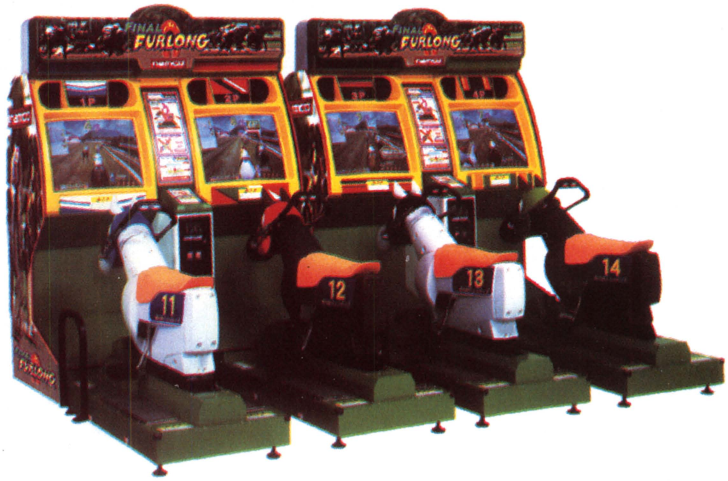
Music industry looks to the Internet for sales

Big music companies like Sony are reportedly exploring the possibility of using the Internet to download and distribute music, possibly for the creation of customized CDs in the future, The *Wall Street Journal* reported recently.

According to the *Journal*, Sony has even registered a trademark for the term Netman (remember the Walkman) for just such applications and is working with IBM on the development of such technology.

The article also chronicled the recent sales of individual tracks for 99 cents each over the Internet by the music company N2K Inc. Customers log on and pay by credit card before downloading the song to their computer's hard drive. Another company is considering the sale of music by the minute, with each 60 seconds of music selling for 10 cents.

Despite such ambitious plans, some of which should be put into place by the end of this year, the technical hurdles, which include the length of download time and the need for high-end computer and CD hardware, are still daunting for most in the music business.



Players will be in for the ride of their life with Namco's newest video attraction, *Final Furlong*, a one- to four-player horse racing game.

Namco heads into *Final Furlong* with new horse racing video

Players will be in for the ride of their life with Namco's newest video attraction, *Final Furlong*, a one- to four-player horse racing game packaged in a unique cabinet featuring 29-inch monitors and two horses per cabinet.

The game offers a selection of three tracks, each of which varies in distance and scenery. There are also six horses to select, each having different qualities: two are for novice riders, while the other four vary in their racing style including leader, front runner, mid-division, and strong finisher. This allows players to match their riding style to the type of horse they choose.

Players rock their horse back and forth using the reins lever to gain speed, and slow down by rocking slower. A whip button is also used to gain maximum speed. Competitors must avoid getting too close or bumping into other horses, while pacing their own steed based on its abilities.

A Spurt Point gives all the players some last minute momentum, and close races are decided by way of a photo-finish feature. Each race is accompanied by live broadcast elements, and advice is given to players at the end of the race on how to improve their skills. For more information, contact Namco's sales office, (630)238-2248; fax (630)238-9333.

MaxFlight captures Wild West

Sam's Town, the planned stop for travelers on their way to and from Lake Tahoe, Nev., kicked off its summer season with the premiere of California's first MaxFlight VR2002 customer-programmable Roller Coaster Simulator. The 30,000-square-foot replica of an 1890s gold mining town also features one of the nation's largest private collections of early Americana.

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ICE releases Crompton's latest redemption game

Innovative Concepts in Entertainment (ICE) has begun shipping the latest redemption game from Cromptons, *Hi-Ball*. The company first showed prototype versions of the *Hi-Ball* at IAAPA `96 and ASI `97.

"What makes this such a solid piece is once again, the simple but alluring game play," said ICE president Ralph Coppola. "A few things about this game have us very excited. Number one, it has tested extremely well in the U.K., where compared to the U.S., redemption is not one of the stronger markets. *Hi-Ball* was really developed to be a classic redemption game. Our belief is that it has that type of appeal that will make it a staple redemption game at FECs worldwide."

The object of the game is for the player to strike the basketball pad launching the balls up and over the playfield of baskets in an effort to land the ball in the baskets and win a designated number of tickets. If the ball lands in the top *Hi-Ball* slot, the player wins the progressive bonus. The game does not end until all of the balls have scored some number of tickets.

Other features include an interactive digital message display, operator-adjustable ticket percentage payout, and CD sound. For more information, contact ICE, (716)759-0370; fax (716)759-0390.

PC technology should bring motion platforms to arcades

The introduction of a PC game platform should lower the risk arcade operators face when considering the purchase of a motion-based simulation experience, according to Ontario, Canada,-based Jesler Enterprises, maker of the Electro-Ride and a member of the newly formed Open Arcade Architecture Forum recently announced by Intel Corp.

By unbundling the components of what were previously proprietary hardware and software packages, operators can now look to interchangeable software for a relatively affordable motion platform. Jesler says this should also convince game developers to write cutting edge software that will run on motion platforms.

The Electro-Ride uses brushless servo motors to drive its system, explained Jesler president Mike Sabatino. "The Electro-Ride was purposely developed without the use of sophisticated air or hydraulic systems to allow for easy servicing and maintenance. The servo technology we use makes it very easy to add motion to any type of simulation."

Jesler's simulation platform takes up 15 square feet of floor space and uses a standard voltage supply. The company is currently working with PC game developer Mango Grits on its new game *Barrage* and American Software Corp. on *Hardcore 4x4* with plans to release both games on its motion base.

"The Electro-Ride has been ready for delivery for over a year," Sabatino said. "Where we have had problems is in convincing game developers that motion is the future of simulation. Once they are shown how easy it is for us to deliver motion, all that remains is for them to make the game arcade-ready. We are always looking for new games. We have also had the normal problems of distribution and placement for our systems and are always looking for solutions to these problems as well."

For more information, contact Jesler Enterprises, (705) 876-0226; fax (705)876-1363; e-mail (jesler@ptbo.igs.net).

AMOA confirms staff, budget trimming moves

The Amusement and Music Operators Association has confirmed reports of cuts in staff and programs that will help trim the association's overhead, however the group's executive vice president Jim Weir said the cuts have taken place over the last year and were not decided on at an officers' meeting this summer.

"It didn't happen in one swoop," Weir said. "This has been happening over the course of the year and it's not just in one area. We looked at what was important and started bringing down some of the spending levels."

Weir said reports are true that hundreds of thousands of dollars have been cut from some of the 25 spending areas in AMOA's budget, including the elimination of the Location newsletter, half of the staff at the association management firm Smith, Bucklin & Associates, and association attendance at various trade shows during the year.

Cuts in staff will leave three full-time and two part-time positions devoted to AMOA business: Weir and Kim Rundle on the administrative side, Nan Hallock handling marketing functions, and Anne Hasty and Brian Casey, both working part-time on the trade show. Some of Smith, Bucklin's in-house resources will also be leveraged for trade show activities, although executive director Marian Griffin will move on to other projects for the firm following AMOA Expo `97. The changes effectively reduce the staff from eight to four members.

According to Weir, steps are also being taken to reduce a debt owed to Smith, Bucklin by AMOA, although he added that a reported figure of $500,000 was "a little high." "AMOA is fine operationally," said Weir, noting the group has $1.2 million in reserves. "The day-to-day money will not be used to pay the debt. We are going to work on the receivable situation. We already have a plan."

Beyond the cuts specified, Weir said the association is striving to set a new direction but cautioned against reading dire predictions in the move to downsize administrative and marketing costs.

"This is not the sign of a sick organization," he said. "I don't know of any organization that is not doing the same thing."

AMOA members will also get a chance to vote at AMOA Expo `97 on a plan that would restructure the board of directors by reducing the number of members by half.

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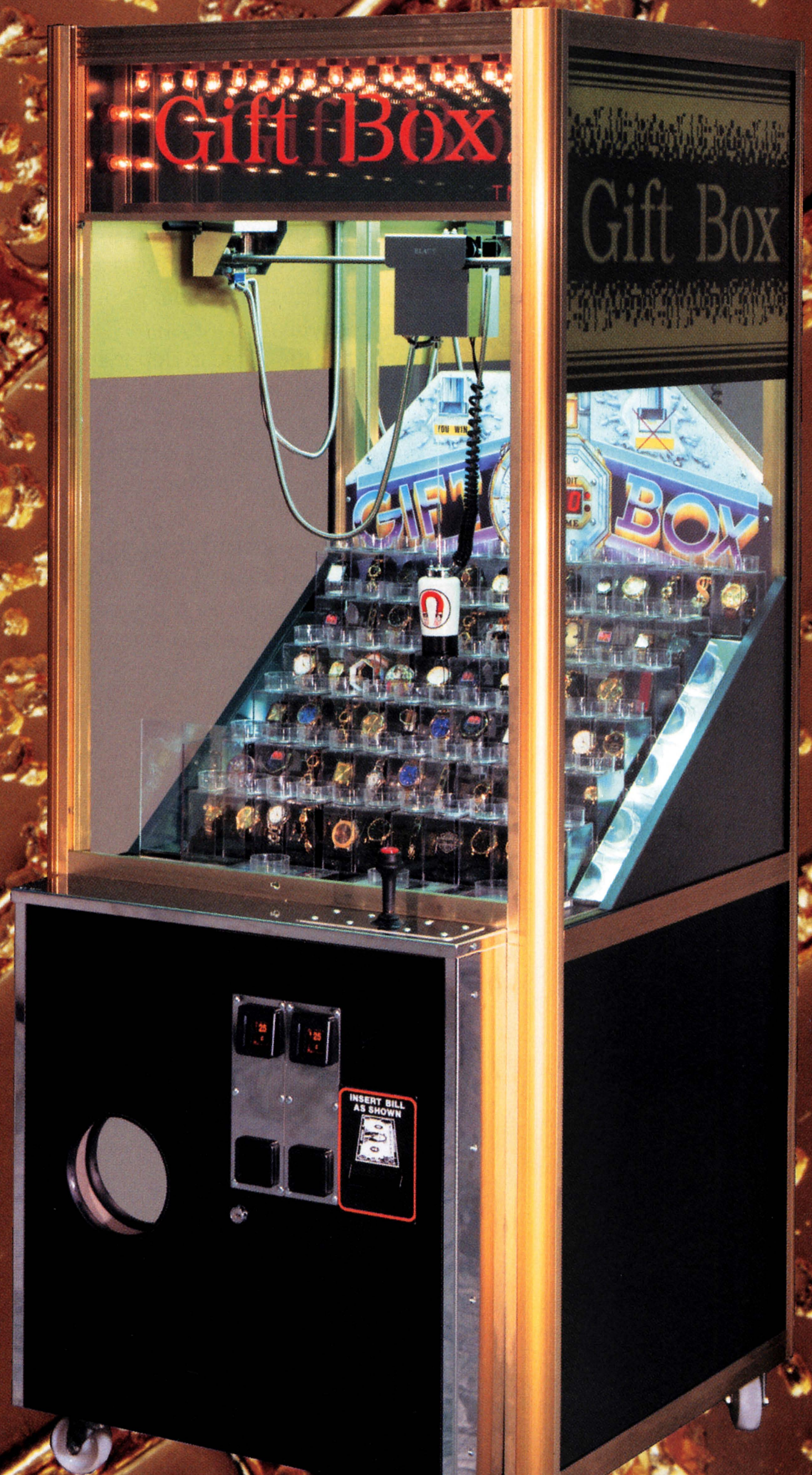

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Namco and Squaresoft enter software licensing agreement

Japanese-based Namco Ltd. and Squaresoft have announced plans for the two companies to enter a licensing agreement. As part of the agreement, Squaresoft will develop software based on Namco's System 12 hardware. Namco will perform all manufacturing and distribution responsibilities

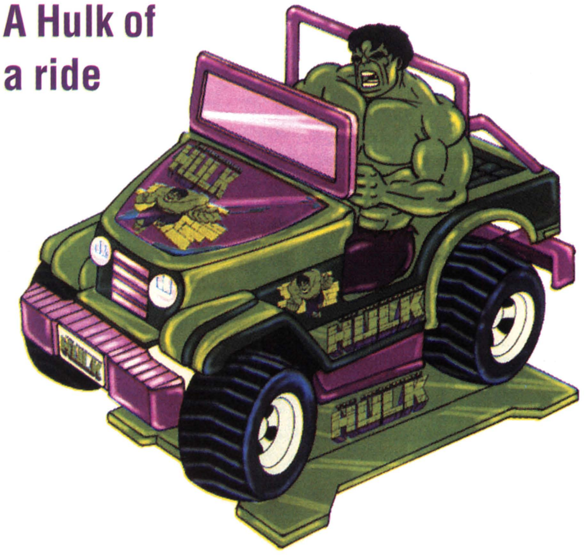
Prior to the agreement, Squaresoft has focused on the consumer market but believes the alliance will benefit the company twofold; not only will it strengthen their position as a leading software developer but also give them a presence in the high-technology commercial arena.

Dream Factory, a subsidiary of Squaresoft, will be in charge of the first project's software development. This is the same design group that developed Tobal 1 and Tobal 2 for the Sony PlayStation. The new game will utilize System 12's 3-D capabilities. Current plans are for the game to debut at the upcoming JAMMA show this month.

System 12 is the hardware used to power Namco's hit video game *Tekken 3*. It is a cost-effective, high-performance board developed in cooperation with Sony Computer Entertainment.

"We are thrilled about joining forces with such a strong software," said Frank Cosentino, vice president of sales and marketing for Namco-America. "Having Squaresoft develop cost-effective, high-tech games on System 12 will further strengthen Namco's position in the marketplace."

A Hulk of a ride



Doug Shipley, vice president of Kiddie's Mfg. Inc. announced the release last month of its newest interactive Marvel licensed kiddie ride, *The Incredible Hulk*, which offers seating for two young riders. Company tests reportedly show increased earnings when the ride is placed next to Kiddie's other recent Marvel release, *Spiderider*.

Have You HEARD

◆ VICCO Electronics has a new telephone area code, (760)322-400. The company's contact information remains unchanged otherwise; 31855 Date Palm Dr., Suite 3-225, Cathedral City, CA 92234-3100; fax (760)322-6268; Web site (http://www.vicco.com).

◆ Crest Electronics, based in Greensboro, N.C., has announced plans to exhibit at AMOA `97 in Atlanta, Ga. The company will show black-and-white and color monitors, as well as a wide range of other electronic equipment.

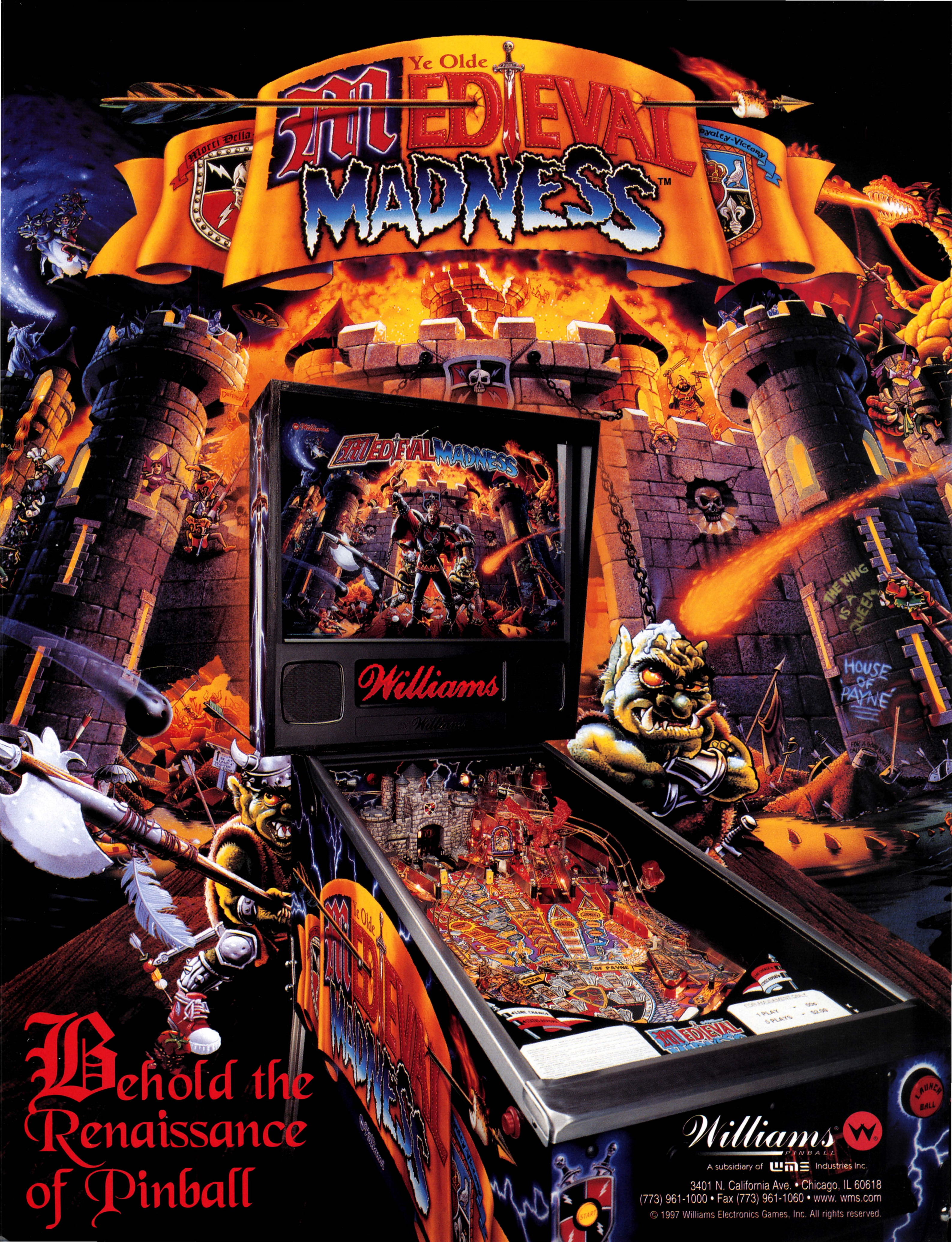
◆ Voters in three Louisiana parishes where horse racing tracks are located will get a chance to vote on a proposal to include slot machines along with video poker terminals currently on location. Race tracks around New Orleans are not included in the proposal.

◆ Champion Shuffleboard reported a 66 percent increase in sales at the BCA Show in Las Vegas over last year. The company also introduced its newest product, *Shuffle Bumper*, which added a new twist to traditional shuffleboard providing 15 feet of playing service in a U-shaped design.

◆ The third annual Amusement Industry Expo, supported by the Outdoor Amusement Business Association and Greater Ohio Showmen's Association, is scheduled for Oct. 28-30 at the International Exposition Center in Cleveland, Ohio. For more information, call (800)870-3976; fax (216)265-2621.

◆ Midway Games has entered into a distribution agreement with Crystal Dynamics, a publisher of Sony PlayStation and PC CD-ROM games. Midway has secured exclusive United States distribution rights for two of Crystal Dynamics' action games: GEX and Pandemonium 2.

◆ Camelot Parks, a central California family entertainment center chain, recently opened its sixth site in Fresno with Ascension Productions' Lazer Runner laser tag system as a featured attraction. All of Camelot Parks' other five locations have also installed one of the company's laser tag attractions. ▲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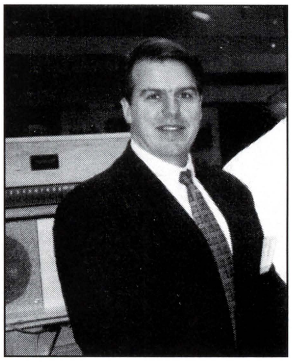
WHO'S NEWS

Rorie Keller

Rorie Keller has joined the redemption supply firm Sureshot Redemption as national sales manager. The San Jose, Calif.-based company specializes in custom logo merchandise, novelty candy assortments, and battery-operated plush toys. Sureshot is a division of Dennis Foland Inc.

Keller, a well-known industry figure and frequent guest speaker at educational seminars, was previously with Ace-Acme/Play-By-Play. While Sureshot is new, key staff members have decades of experience working with leaders in entertainment merchandising. Keller says she is excited to be working with the forward-thinking new company.

Sureshot has just completed its introductory catalog that reflects a top-notch merchandise line including over 375 prize items. Sureshot is located at 1630-8 Berryessa Road, San Jose, CA 95133; (800)88SURE8 or (408)93SURE8; fax (408)259-3191.



Dan McAllister

TouchTunes vice president John Margold has announced the addition of **Dan McAllister** as national sales manager for the Canadian-based jukebox manufacturer. Prior to his new post McAllister was director of sales for Rock-Ola Mfg. Corp. He started his coin-op career at Merit Industries in 1993; before that he was in the computer software business.

According to Margold, "Dan was a tenacious competitor when I was in my previous position. I learned to respect his knowledge and sincerity. I value his work ethic; he is just the type of individual that we want on the TouchTunes team." TouchTunes is owned by Technical Maintenance Corp., which is traded on the NASDAC (TCMN). McAllister can be reached at (215)830-1452.

Patty McShane

Patty McShane has been named sales manager for CashCode, the Canadian-based manufacturer of bill validators for amusement, vending, gaming, lottery, and transportation applications. McShane was formerly with Indiana-based J.D. Sales Co. She will be based in the CashCode Orlando, Fla., office and will represent the company at major trade shows.

CashCode senior vice president of sales and marketing Val Levitan said, "We are extremely pleased to have Patty join our sales team. She has a great rapport with people and an excellent grasp of the details of our product and our industry."

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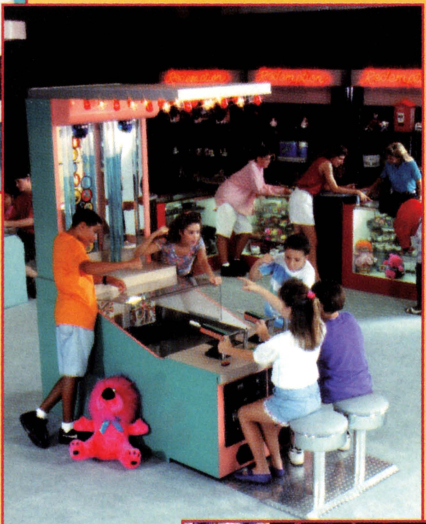

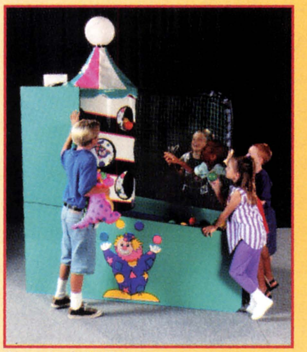

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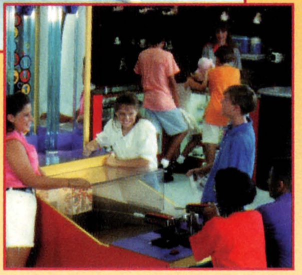

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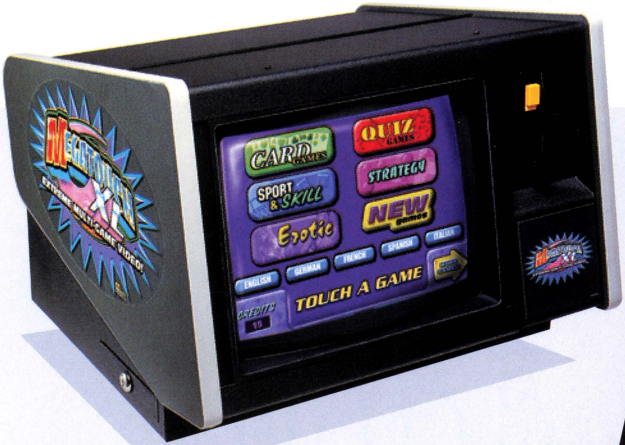

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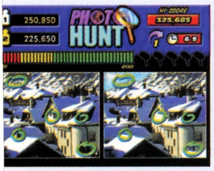

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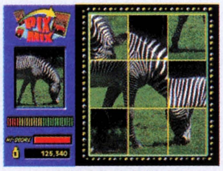

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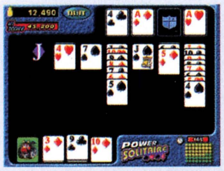

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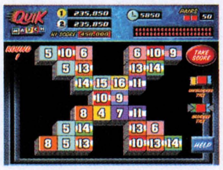

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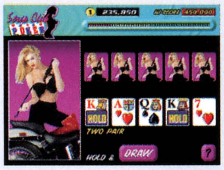

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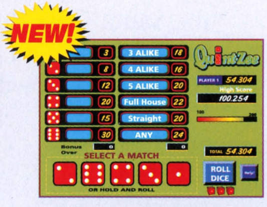
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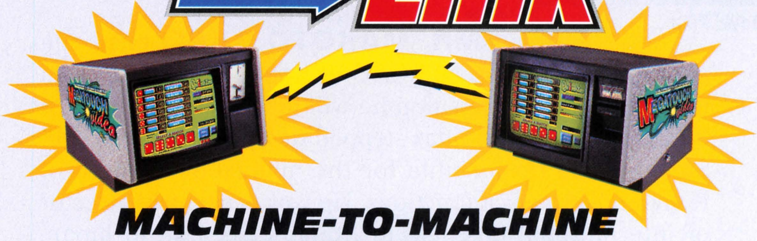

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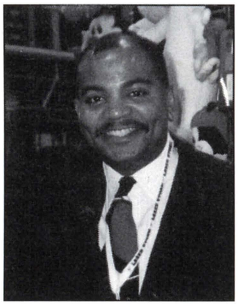
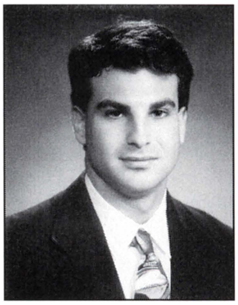

Tim Jackson

TIM JACKSON has joined SNK Corp. of America as director of distributor sales. He was most recently sales director at Planet Earth Entertainment. Jackson is a 14-year industry veteran whose coin-op career includes tenure at Capcom Coin-Op and Romstar. His background includes dealing with all types of product, from video to pinball to redemption. Jackson commented, "I'm glad to be part of a growing team that is dedicated to the industry. What the future holds for SNK is brighter, not only for SNK but for distribution in general because of the abundant software that SNK will provide for the new 64-bit system. I look forward to working with John Barone and building a strong team." Jackson can be contacted at the SNK office in San Jose, Calif., (408)286-6270.

Seidel Amusement Machine Co. has named **BARRY WATKINS** general manager and **BOB RAKEL** national sales manager. Watkins' background is in engineering and business management. He has over 22 years of experience in the arcade and redemption games industry. Before taking this new post he was vice president of operations for Mission Bay Attractions for seven years and president of Pirate's Hideaway FEC for two years. Watkins also was general manager and director of operations for Canfield Concessions on the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk. Rakel has an extensive sales background that will prove invaluable to Seidel as it continues its growth into the 21st century. Watkins and Rakel can be reached at (505)821-6878.


David Piha

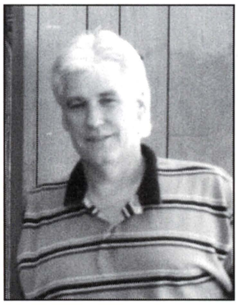
DAVID PIHA has joined the sales staff at AMA Distributors in Metairie, La. He recently was graduated from Tulane University in New Orleans. Piha, who is the son of Rubin Piha, vice president of Greater Southern Distributing Co. in Atlanta, Ga., said, "After growing up around the coin-op amusement industry, I am very excited to finally work in the business." He can be contacted at (504)835-3232.

MR. MAKOTO SANO has been appointed chairman and CEO of Konami of America. In this newly-created position he will take over the duties of Ken Dirnberger, who has stepped down as president. Mr. Sano will be responsible for the management of all of Konami of America functions. He was previously director of international business at Konami Co. Ltd. in Japan, where he managed the entire international operations for the company. Before coming to Konami, he was executive vice president of Goodyear Japan and also served as general manager of the creative living division at Nippon Light Metal Co. Noted Mr. Kagemasa Kozuki, CEO of Konami Group Worldwide: "We are very pleased to send Mr. Sano to the United States. His experience and relations in Japan will certainly benefit Konami of America as we continue to grow our computer entertainment businesses here in the U.S. market." Mr. Sano will be at Konami of America's Buffalo Grove, Ill., office, (847)215-5100.

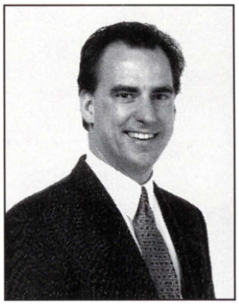
BOB LENTZ of Merit Industries, who recently suffered a heart attack and underwent angioplasty surgery, is on the mend and following a regimen of exercise and a special diet to ensure his recovery. At press time Lentz was working out of his home and was expected back to a full schedule in short order. To reach him soon in the office, call (215)639-4700.

Dave Courington (r) accepts award from Gregg Elliott.

DAVE COURINGTON, vice president of sales for Valley Recreation Products, was recently honored at the first Valley International Foosball Association Championships in Oshkosh, Wis. VIFA executive director Gregg Elliott presented an appreciation award to Courington for his many years of dedicated service to the sport of foosball, especially leagues and tournaments.


Barry Findley

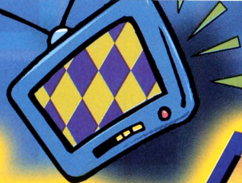
Astro Distributing president John Nelson has announced the appointment of **BARRY FINDLEY** to the Astro sales team. Findley will be responsible for marketing redemption games and kiddie rides internationally and throughout North America. Findley has over 20 years of experience in sales and marketing. Nelson commented, "Adding a sales pro like Barry to our team increases our ability to provide our customers with the best choice equipment with the lowest risk and the quickest return on investment." Findley can be reached at (800)797-7066 or (309)786-7066.


Pete Gustafson

Tina Claybon-Carter

PETE GUSTAFSON has moved to a new post at Sega GameWorks L.L.C. as Western region sales manager replacing **LAMAR FORQUE**, who recently left the company. Gustafson was formerly sales manager for special products. Also at Sega GameWorks L.L.C., **TINA CLAYBON-CARTER** joins the team as advertising/marketing manager. She has over three years of marketing experience with Sega of America in addition to outside experience in sales. Gustafson and Claybon-Carter can be reached at (415)802-3100.

FRANK MARTIN, senior partner at Righeimer, Martin & Cinquino P.C. of Chicago, has been elected to the board of directors of Wells-Gardner Electronics Corp. following the retirement of Allan Gardner. Company chairman and CEO Anthony Spier said, "We will all miss Allan's sage advice and unfailing enthusiasm. We are very fortunate to have Frank. His extensive background in banking will aid our board, particularly regarding acquisitions." ▲



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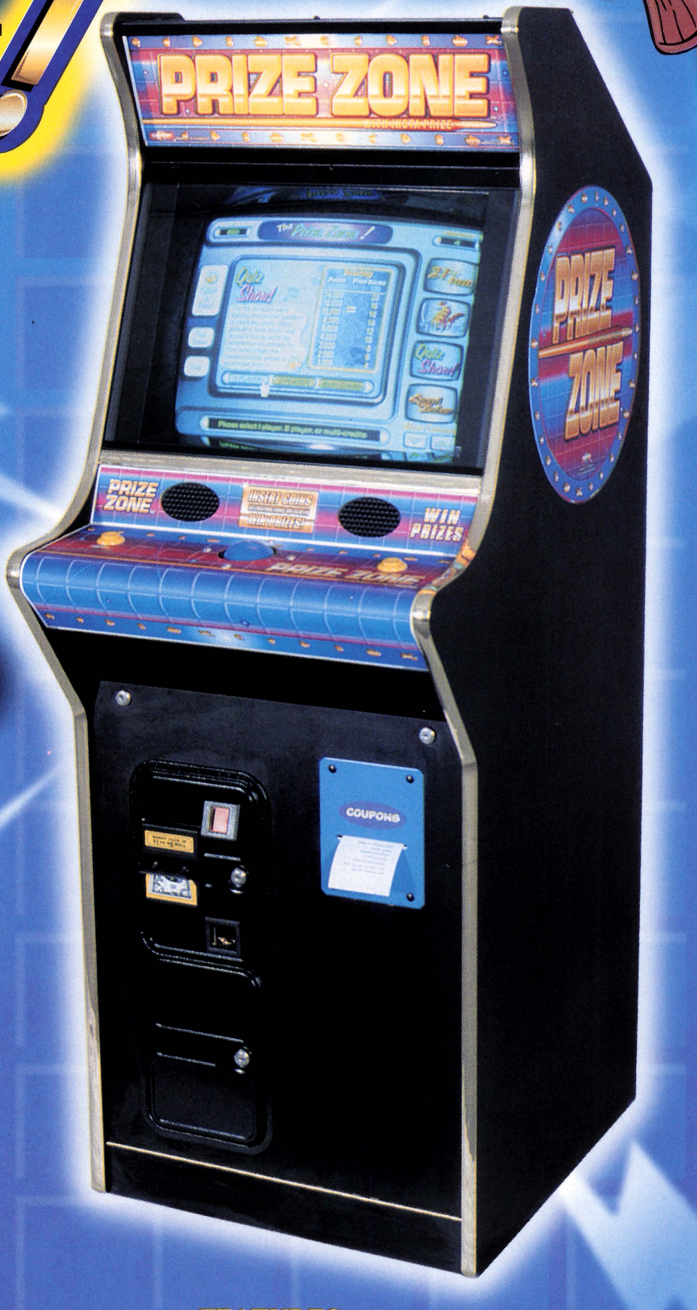
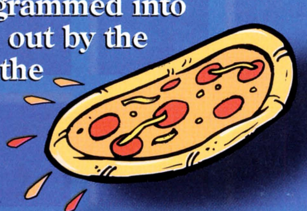


Prize Zone is the first multi-game prize machine for street locations. Players can play a variety of exciting skill games and acquire prize credits based upon how well they play. Prize credits are then exchanged for prizes programmed into the game. A coupon is printed out by the machine to be redeemed with the attendant.



PRIZES: Up to 15 different prizes can be used. No merchandise counter is required. Most of the prizes can be the items that are already sold at the location, such as food and drinks. Payout %'s are completely adjustable.

GAMES: Prize Zone offers 7 exciting SKILL games. All games feature Progressive Jackpots and Insta-Prize.™ Insta-Prize is our patented feature that allows players to win large prizes on a single play. Prizes such as a TV or a pizza can be won, in one game, without exceeding desired payout.

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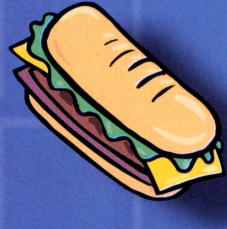

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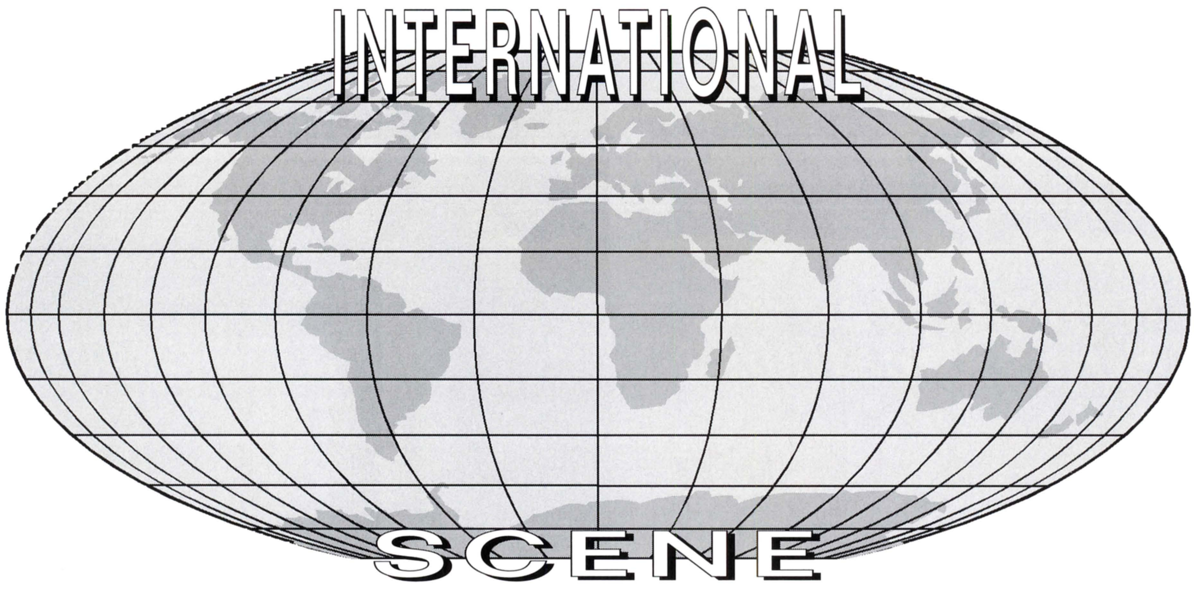

INTERNATIONAL SCENE

BRAZIL'S SALEX '97 GETS RAVE REVIEWS

The Salex show, held in the Mart Centre in Sao Paulo, Brazil, July 25-27 brought rave reviews from exhibitors, who seemed to agree that the show was positive from the standpoints of organization, style, and attendance.

Most of the representatives from the American companies who attended said they had a good show. It was said that the absence of many U.S. companies was noticeable.

The market has shifted somewhat because the crane boom apparently is over and the strong products appear to be jukeboxes and countertop games.

Gene Brogowski of ICE was attending his third Salex show, the second with agent Game House. The company showed three brand-new products at Salex, making a total of seven new games since last year. ICE also showed a new game specific for Brazil and Argentina, a payout version of its mega hit, *Cyclone Jr.*

Here's what Brogowski had to say: "The street is turning to redemption because of the big players in Brazil like Playcenter with its FECs and upscale redemption. This is benefitting companies like ICE. We had a good show with positive results based on the success of operators with ICE equipment in the last year."

Bill Ward of NSM agreed that jukeboxes are hot. "We had good traffic," he said. "Things are developing fast for NSM in Brazil, with good growth in the last two years and still a lot of opportunity there." He added that NSM still has good market position in South America and Mexico. He praised the work of dedicated salesman Dave Drouillard who works that market.

Rex Yarnell of Rowe International said he thought the show was excellent. He added that he's seeing yearly growth in Brazil, with a strong finance program that has boosted sales and good established local distribution, parts, and service. He added, "This is the largest export market next to Mexico."

Joe Dillon of Williams Bally/Midway has been attending Salex for five years and admitted that this was the biggest show ever. "The South American market tends to be influenced by the government," he explained. "Brazil is trying to balance the trade deficit by using taxes, making

Mike Jablonski (l) and Louis Rummenigge of Rock-Ola Mfg. by the *SyberSonic Legend*.

At the NSM booth, (l-r): Bill Ward, Jurgen Jost, and Keith White next to the *Nostalgia Gold*.

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Lou Rudolph (l) of Merit Industries with Aldo Andreu at the Andreu International booth.

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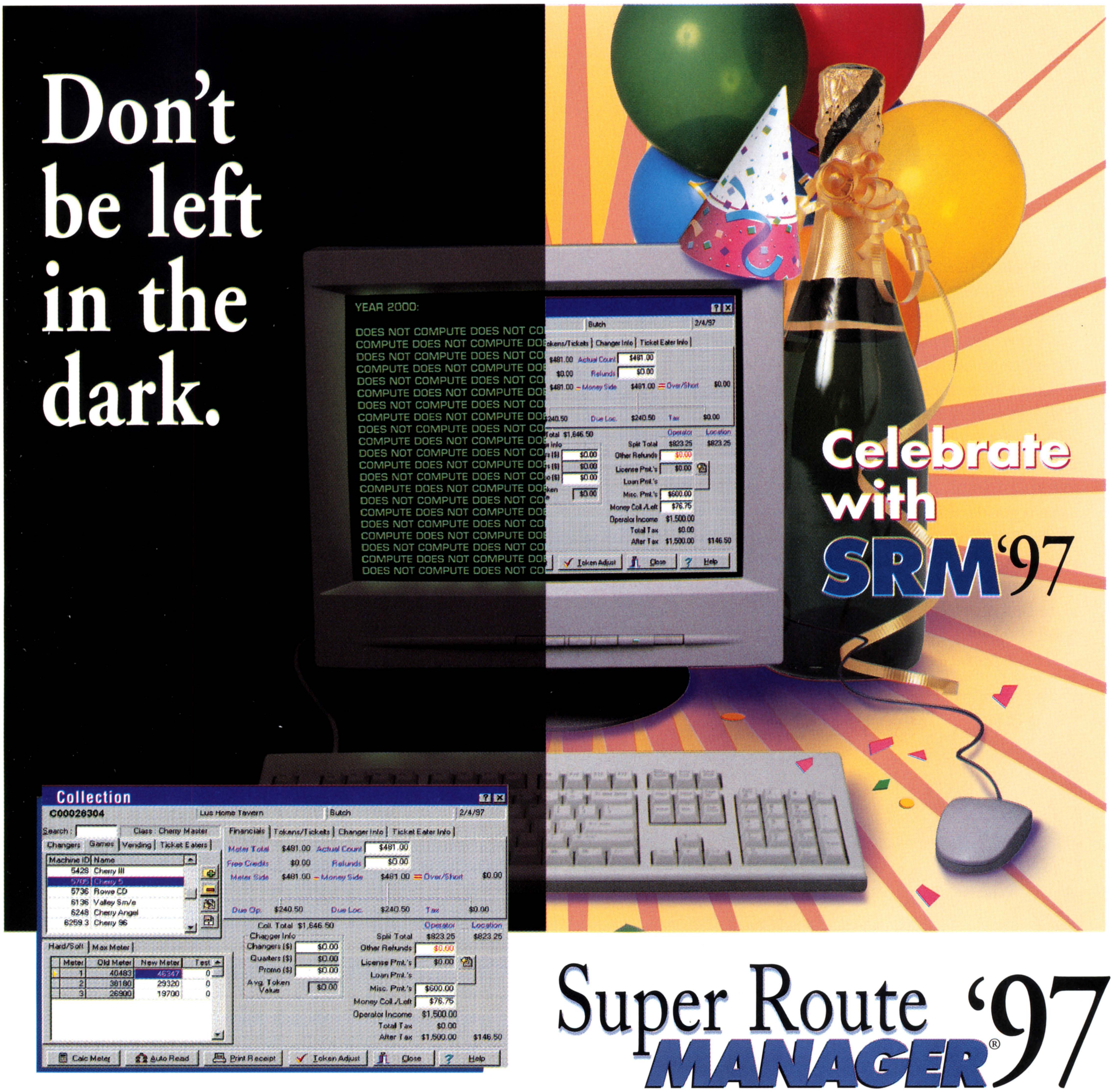
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Machine ID	Name
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6248	Cherry Angel
6259.3	Cherry 96

Meter	Old Meter	New Meter	Test
1	40483	46347	0
2	38180	29320	0
3	26900	19700	0

Meter Total $481.00 Actual Count $481.00
Free Credits $0.00 Refunds $0.00
Meter Side $481.00 – Money Side $481.00 = Over/Short $0.00
Due Op. $240.50 Due Loc. $240.50 Tax $0.00

Coll. Total $1,646.50
Changer Info
Changers ($) $0.00
Quarters ($) $0.00
Promo ($) $0.00
Avg. Token Value $0.00

	Operator	Location
Split Total	$823.25	$823.25
Other Refunds	$0.00	
License Pmt.'s	$0.00	
Loan Pmt.'s		
Misc. Pmt.'s	$600.00	
Money Coll./Left	$76.75	
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Total Tax	$0.00	
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INTERNATIONAL SCENE

importation more difficult, but there is strong player demand. Business is increasing through the efforts of Lenore Sayers, who has been responsible for South America for the last five years." Dillon said that Williams will be concentrating more on South America and Mexico in the future.

Louie Rummenigge of Rock-Ola Mfg. said, "The jukebox business is very healthy here, expanding out of the cities and into the interior of the country. Music is having better penetration than videos in the interior. Brazil is the best jukebox market in South America. The Brazilians like music and have a good established music industry, and the jukebox market is not cyclical like cranes. We are introducing a new system to give even better service and performance."

Some of the other companies attending Salex, such as Skee-Ball and Coastal Amusements, also said they had a good show.

This report was filed by Lou Rudolph of Merit Industries.

COMPACT DISC

Dominick Savata (c) of Rowe International shows the *Starlight* to attendees.

The Williams gang, (l-r): Tom Cahill, Christa Woss, Joe Dillon, and Lenore Sayers with new pins and *Cruis'n World*.

IAAPA SUPPORTS AMUSEMENT PARK CHINA '97

Amusement Park China, the China international expo on amusement park equipment, has a strong supporter in the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions.

The show, which is scheduled Oct. 21-24 at the China World Trade Centre in Beijing, China, is co-organized by the China Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (CAAPA) and Reed Exhibition Companies. Reed recently acquired Fun Expo.

CAAPA is dedicated to developing the event as the best of its kind in China. IAAPA's top executives Gena Romano, president, and John Robert Graff, executive director and counsel, will fly to Beijing to address the conference. Other notable speakers will include Alvin Carroll Turner, executive director of the World Waterpark Association; Dr. Heinz Rico Scherrieb, director of the Institute for Tourism and Leisure Research; C.T. Hsu, president of C.T. Hsu International; and Dennis Speigel, president of International Theme Park Services.

Major firms from over 10 countries will participate in the event: AB Hags from Sweden; American Games Adventures, Battaglia, C.T. Hsu International, and Showscan Entertainment from the Untied States; Darklight Systems Asia from Indonesia; Delta Play Ltd. and Whitewater West Industries Ltd. from Canada; Entertainment Franchising Ltd., Megazone, Excellent Competence, Homell Ltd., and Parks Supplies Co. Ltd. from Hong Kong; Fab Feizeit-Anlagen-Bau from Luxembourg; Intamin and Westech Ltd. from Switzerland; Moser Rides, Preston International, and Sartoria Import-Export S.P.A. from Italy; Okamoto Mfg. Co. Ltd. from Japan; and Van Egdom and Vekoma International B.V. from Holland.

Exhibits will include amusement park equipment, supplies, and services such as admission and management systems, animatronics and robotics, rides, and carousels. In addition, look for CD jukeboxes, laser games, indoor and outdoor furnishings, table games, and water-related equipment and supplies.

For more information, contact Elaine Lau at Reed Exhibition Companies, (852)2965-1620; fax (852)2824-0178; or e-mail (elainel@reedexpo.com.hk).

ANDREU OPENS NEW COMPANY

Aldo Andreu has opened his own firm in Miami, Fla., to distribute games, parts, and vending equipment throughout South America. Andreu was formerly president of James Industries South.

Andreu International is located at 801 Brickell Ave., Suite 936, Miami, FL 33131; (305)371-0098; fax (305)789-6664.

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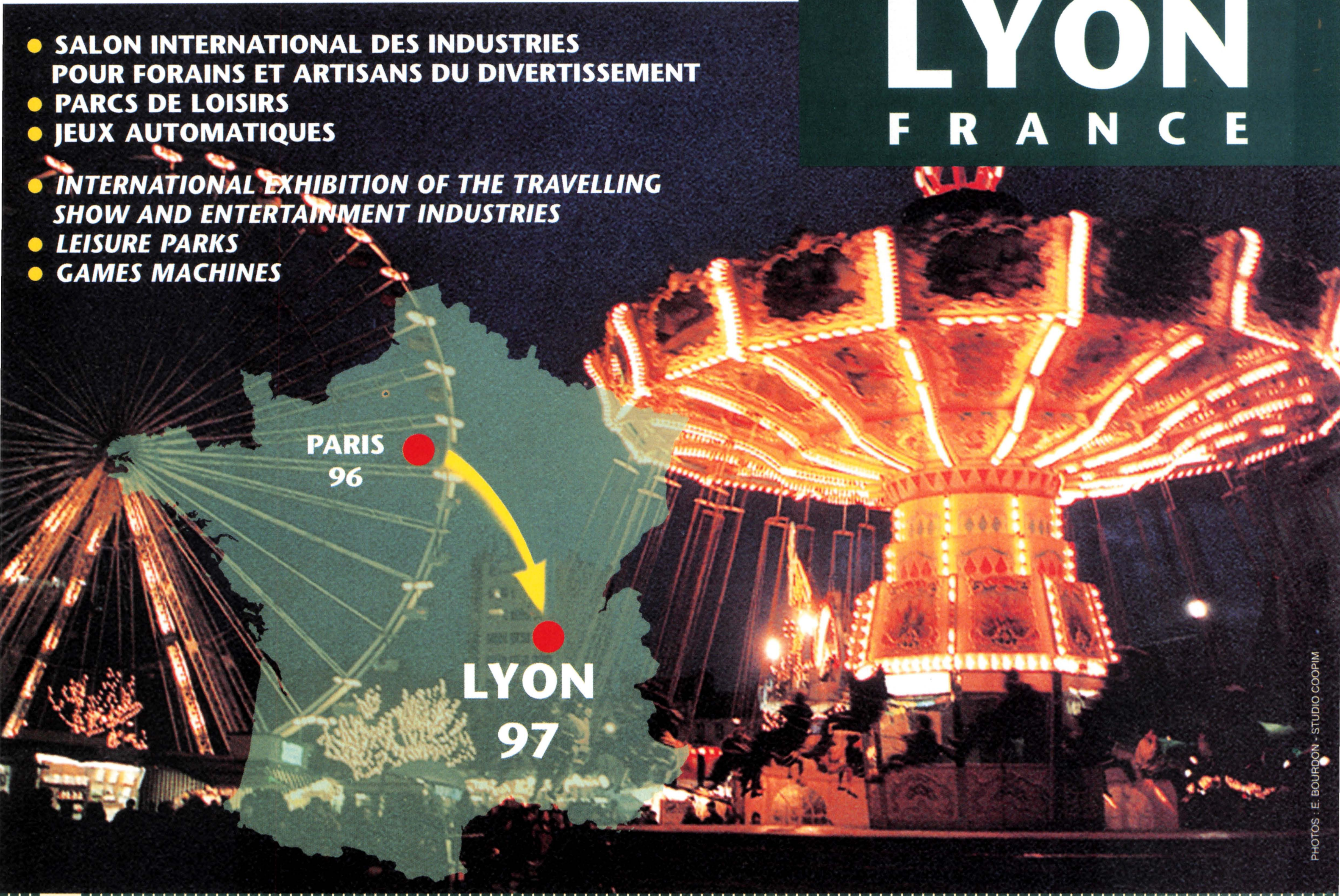

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INTERNATIONAL
SCENE

DREAMWORLD HITS THE 'NET

Dreamworld, the theme park with the tallest ride in the world and the only interactive tiger exhibit outside of the United States, has launched its Web site.

The Queensland, Australia, facility, which is located on the famed Gold Coast, is accessible via the Internet (www.dreamworld.com.au) where visitors can get a preview of the high-tech thrill rides Tower of Terror and Wipeout and animal exhibits Koala Country and Tiger Island. Other attractions, restaurants, and special events and promotions are also on the Web site.

Dreamworld CEO Fred Maybury believes the Internet is an excellent medium to advertise and promote the theme park. "Much of our advertising is invested in TV because Dreamworld is a visual product," said Maybury. "The Internet allows us to effectively combine our cinema, TV, corporate brochure, and sales force into one dynamic marketing tool. Our Web site has been integrated into our marketing mix because it now makes information about Dreamworld readily accessible to all market segments worldwide."

Maybury also noted that 'Net users can use the educational content for research purposes. Information on the Bengal tigers and native wildlife "enable us to reinforce our conservation through education," he added.

CAE '97 POSTPONED

The China Amusement Expo '97, originally set for Sept. 25-29 at the Beijing Exhibition Centre in Beijing, China, will be postponed to summer 1998.

According to show host Business & Industrial Trade Fairs Ltd., a major government activity requires the allocation of the Centre in September. B & I and co-organizer China International Advertising Corp. have been gearing up for the comprehensive amusement trade event that has support from the China National Tourism Administration and Entertainment Office and Cultural Market, Administration of Ministry of Culture.

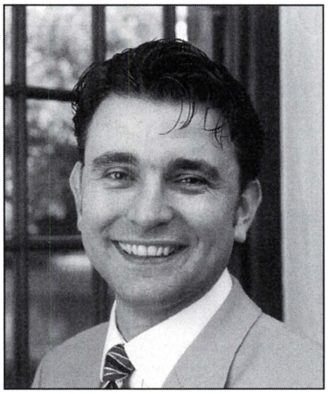
Organizers say that contracted exhibitors are continuing their support. Planned exhibits will include computers and electronic games, equipment for indoor and outdoor amusement parks and sports and leisure facilities, audio and visual products, and accessories such as security systems. For more information, call (852)2865-2633; fax (852)2866 1770, 2866-2076.

ATE ADDS GRINNALL AND HANNAH

Amusement Trades Exhibition Ltd. has added two new staff members: Paul Grinnall as sales manager and James Stuart Hannah as operations deputy.

Grinnall was one of the pioneers who launched Leisure Industry Week at the NEC Birmingham. Prior to that he was a director at Service 2000 Europe Ltd. where he was responsible for the computer industry event International Service Expo at RAI Amsterdam. He was also European sales manager at Thomson Training & Simulation.

ATE chief executive Peter Rusbridge said, "Paul has a breadth of valuable experience directly relevant to the sales and marketing of what is now a one-stop amusement and gaming exhibition. His initial focus will be to take our parks and rides section into the next stage of development following its relaunch two years ago. His duties will also include sales responsibilities for both ATEI and the International Casino Exhibition in order to provide the foundations for future expansion."


Paul Grinnall

James Stuart Hannah

Hannah's background is in project management. He was previously with Toronto, Canada-based Sybran Event Management and also City TV as project coordinator. He will report to operations manager Dawn Millroy

Rusbridge commented, "Providing our customers with the best possible level of service has always been at the top of our business agenda. James' appointment is another example of the ATE board investing in the future development of the exhibition. His track record of managing large scale public events will be of immense value to ATEI and its exhibitors."

FINE TUNING

Tuning Electronics has moved into its spacious new headquarters in Hamburg, Germany. The company's new phone is +49-40-528-00-00; fax +49-40-528-00-028; e-mail (tuning1@tuning.com).

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- Web: http://www.amoa.com

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INTERNATIONAL SCENE

☛ Universal Studios Japan is on the drawing board for Osaka, Japan, in spring 2001 announced USJ Co. Ltd. of Osaka. The theme park will offer 18 different attractions, including many featured at Universal Studios Hollywood and Universal Studios Florida: Jurrasic Park the Ride, Terminator 2-3D, Water World Show, Back to the Future the Ride, E.T. Adventure, Jaws, The Wild Wild Wild West Stunt Show, and Animal Actors Stage. USJ is a joint venture of 37 companies.

☛ Singapore-based Worldwide Leisure has been formed by Kevin Moss of Sound Leisure in the United Kingdom and Jimmy Koh of the Singapore manufacturing firm Koh Bong Sin. The company will make and assemble games for the Asian market.

☛ Australia's four Intencity FECs that opened in Westfield shopping malls will close.

☛ Seta Co. Ltd. of Tokyo, Japan (no relation to Sega), has developed a coin-op CG game system board called Aleck 64, based on the Nintendo 64 home video system main board. Aleck 64 can process 350,000 polygons per second.

☛ Additional Pelikaani amusement centers are planned for the chain run by Pelika Ray Oy of Finland. Five new centers will join the current 34 in the country.

☛ The long-awaited Hyper Neo-Geo 64 cartridge-based game system from SNK Corp. recently debuted at a private showing in Japan. Games included the fighting-themed *Samurai Spirit* and the dedicated driver *Round Trip RV.*

☛ Japan giants Sega and Bandai have called off a planned merger of the two companies. Differences in "corporate culture" were cited as the basis for the decision.

IT'S NO *secret*

☛ Big drop-style tower rides that raise patrons 200-plus feet into the sky are popular at major theme parks and apparently with coin-op seniors as well. Blackpool Pleasure Beach chairman Dorothy Thompson (94) rode the park's new Playstation: The Ride when it opened along with members of the United Kingdom band Bayzone. Thompson has a history of personally testing all new attractions. Way to go Dorothy!

News items from Game Machine, AB Europe, and InterGame.

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INTERNATIONAL SCENE

INTERNATIONAL CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER 17-20
IAAPA Summer Meeting, New Amsterdam, Holland. Call IAAPA, (703)836-4800; fax (703)836-4801.

SEPTEMBER 18-21
JAMMA, International Exhibition Centre, Tokyo, Japan. Call +81-3-3438-2363; fax +81-3-5472-7115.

SEPTEMBER 30-OCTOBER 2
International Leisure Industry Week, NEC, Birmingham, England. Call +44-1932-564455; fax +44-1932-560009.

OCTOBER 1-3
FER-Interazar '97, Parque Ferial, Juan Carlos 1. Madrid, Spain. Call +34-3-416-1466; fax +34-3-415-0095.

OCTOBER 5-7
EELEX '97, Expo Centre, Moscow, Russia. Call +7-812-315-5740; fax +7-812-315-6883.

OCTOBER 16-19
ENADA '97, Rome Fairgrounds, Rome, Italy. Call +39-6-88-473217; fax +39-6-440-2718.

OCTOBER 21-24
Amusement Park China '97, China World Trade Center, Beijing, China. Call (203)840-5355; fax (203)840-9570.

OCTOBER 24-26
5th Park Show, Rimini, Italy. Call Rimini Trade Fair Corp., +39-541-711-240; fax +39-541-711-519.

NOVEMBER 6-9
Australia Amusement Expo, Marriott Surfers Paradise Resort, Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia. Call Ken Priest, 61-7-3841-1021; fax 61-7-3841-1332.

NOVEMBER 19-21
3rd International Amusement Expo and 5th South American Gaming Supplies Expo, Sheraton Buenos Aires Hotel, Buenos Aires, Argentina. Phone and fax: 541-3227039.

NOVEMBER 25-28
Induferias '97, Valencia, Spain. Call Ana Caballero, 96-386-1100; fax 96-363-6111 or 96-364-4064.

NOVEMBER 28-30
GTI Expo '97, Taichung World Trade Center, Taichung, Taiwan. Call Lauren Swartz, +886-2-760-7407; fax +886-2-762-3873.

DECEMBER 9-12
Forainexpo Lyon '97, Eurexpo Lyon, France. Call 33-1-47-56-21-08; fax 33-1-47-56-21-10/20. ▲

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FROM LEFT FIELD

Getting in swing with PC games

Last month I started my column with a quote from one of my heroes, the patron saint of jazz Louis Armstrong, commenting on the enigmatic nature of his art form. In my mind, the real beauty of jazz lies in that undefinable quality that allows a group of musicians to express themselves individually within a larger musical framework.

A jazz performance generates energy through an ongoing musical conversation between members of the band, and like most casual conversations it comes about on an improvised basis. There is no script, no musical sheet laying out melodies and rhythm. No master plan.

Yet somehow this group made up of individual members, each with his own agenda, manages to make the sum whole swing, and that's what makes it jazz. What's the old line: it don't mean a thing if it ain't got that swing...doo wop, doo wop, doo wop, doo wop!

This coalescing of voices is undoubtebly a testament to the individual members of the band and their respective talents, but it's also a function of some larger ethos, some ethic or code that all of the members bring to the performance. Their role is to utilize every morsel of that talent, listening intently to their fellow band members, in making a statement that is meaningful both on a personal level and to the group as a whole.

It has been described by some as the perfect model for democracy, and while it may seem far fetched I suggest it is an appropriate ideal for the ongoing development of new PC-based video games.

Last month Intel announced the formation of the Open Arcade Architecture Forum (for more on that subject, turn to "Through the Looking Glass"), a group that hopes to bring together the disparate voices in pursuit of bringing PC technology to the coin-op industry.

Intel's Albert Teng said at least one of the computer chip maker's roles was that of "cheerleader or facilitator" bringing all these different players together in a group to work out the details of matching hardware, software, peripheral, and development tool vendors together to produce cohesive and, most importantly, entertaining games.

That role, as envisioned by Intel, is not so far afield from those of great big band leaders like Duke Ellington or Count Basie who provided their players with a basic roadmap and used their effective yet benevolent leadership to help steer the course.

Conversely, there is a natural fear among some of the many players—which include both small and incredibly large companies—that a so-called casual leadership role can imply either a hands off, non-commital stance on one hand or a mask for more autocratic intentions on the other. Only time will tell on that score.

In the meantime, as the industry strives to capitalize on the possibilities latent in the modern PC, let us hope that the group as a whole will forge some ethic or code not unlike that of jazz musicians in order to achieve success on an individual basis and bring more prosperity to all, including the operators who so eagerly await the results of this effort.

Maybe I am being naive, or showing my lack of experience, in expressing such utopian desires, but so what! How else can we describe the founding fathers of the United States, as they laid out the initial plans for democracy, putting compromise ahead of conquest.

Just remember: It don't mean a thing, if ain't got that swing.... ▲

Steve White
Associate Editor

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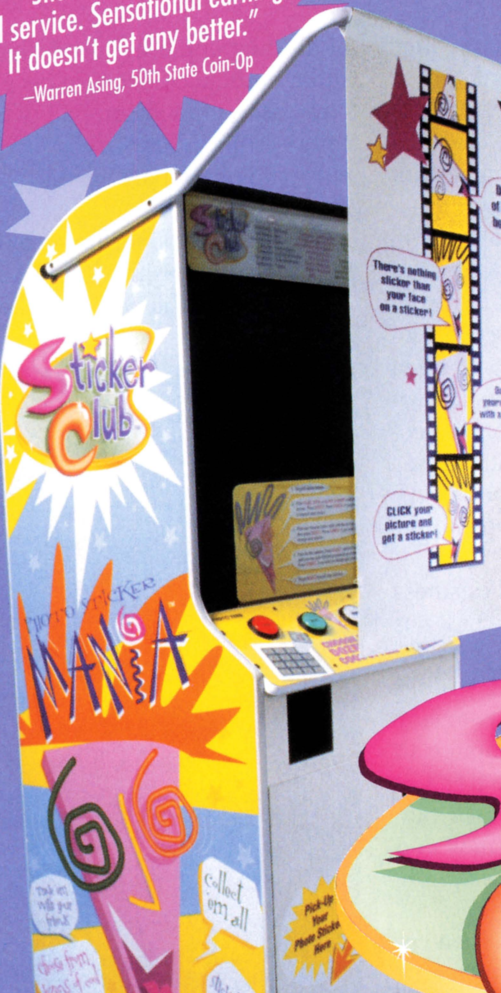
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EYE ON
ASIA

JEFF **BLAIR** and
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An eye on both ASIA and AMERICA

It's refreshing to step out from under the "coin-op umbrella" every now and then to look at the world around me. My daily routine keeps me pretty much focused on my own business. Sometimes I forget all about the other industries out there.

This is neither good nor bad, just an observation. Besides, it's good for me to focus on my profession and think about ways to enhance it. I'm no different than millions of others, no matter what industry they're in. There's a lot of comfort in the familiar—the people, the product, and the industry! The more I know about what I do, the better I can do it.

In this month's "Eye on Asia" I would like to look at "An Eye on America" and how the two are working together to build both business and personal relationships. As some already know, my parent company is based in Taiwan. Having the opportunity to work closely with the principals who built a successful business, one that has flourished for more than 20 years, made me realize how large the world really is.

Most companies start out small and they achieve growth through increased business. We are no different. I used to wonder how some of the more successful companies managed their growth. What type of plan did they have? Was their growth intentional or did they stumble onto the next widget? I suppose there are as many different stories as there are companies out there.

I'm lucky. My office is literally on both sides of the ocean. My world of business is a lot larger and so is the opportunity for growth. The people of Asia and America have long been working together to build their own empires. I've talked with scores of people who have grown their businesses by going offshore. Perhaps not a very new way of doing things, but not as common as I once thought.

Most of the international business I've been involved with in the past has been in the amusement industry. It's a good living, but let's face it, it does have its ups and downs. Our company has been diversified long enough to sustain growth in spite of the trend of our industry. I personally have not, though, and learning about new and different industries has been extremely valuable.

Here's a recent example: A friend of mine owns a company which manufactures flashlights. We were discussing the business one day and he told me that he has so many orders for lights that he can't fill them fast enough. A nice problem to have for sure. In spite of all the people he hired, there was still a bottleneck because his philosophy was to manufacture all of his own components in his own factory. That's each and every part for the 20 or 30 models he carries.

Sensing an opportunity, but mindful of our friendship, I explained my company's capabilities. To make a long

Entropy International and Entropy USA have been in the amusement industry for more than 20 years. Tony Yeh is vice president of marketing for the international company and Jeff Blair is the chief operating officer for the USA group. Entropy is involved in the design and manufacture of coin-op games and parts. They can be reached at (908)506-0002; (800)241-0633; e-mail (entropyusa@sprynet.com); Web site (entropyusa.com).

Jeff Blair and Tony Yeh

> "Most companies start out small and they achieve growth through increased business."

story short, through our mutual trust and friendship he agreed to have Entropy supply some of his components. This was for the first time in his company's 22-year history!

The moral of the story for me is to build a business through relationships. As I look back, that's pretty much how things have gone. I realize that business won't always come as easy, but I must realize the opportunity when it does.

I'm a humble guy, not the most worldly, with only average intelligence. OK, I'm not the next Bill Gates. But success has come from hard work, focus, and relationships. I was tired of complaining about the industry I'm in. I'm also weary of hearing others complain about the lack of business, the competitors, the same old product. I was lucky that my eyes were opened to the world around me. I might not get all the new business I hope for, but one thing is certain, I'll miss 100 percent of the shots I never take! ▲

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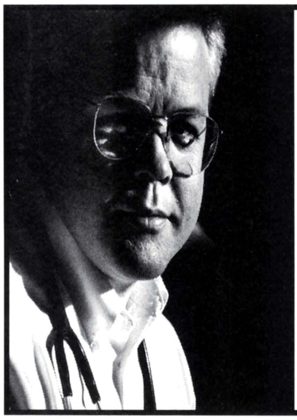
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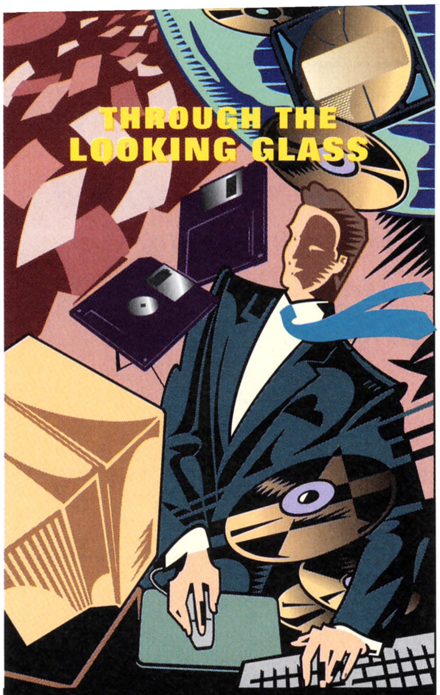


STEVE WHITE

Open Arcade Architecture Forum

provides a meeting of the minds

The big news last month in the ongoing quest to develop arcade games and location-based entertainment attractions on a PC technology platform was the formation of the Open Arcade Architecture Forum (OAAF). Intel Corp., the computer chip maker which has taken a lead since the spring in pushing the platform to market, made the announcement.

According to Intel, the OAAF was formed to encourage rapid market development and ensure system and software compatibility, while delivering arcade game performance at least equal to that currently being produced by traditional coin-op companies. The company says the initiative will also encourage game developers to utilize the performance of Intel's Pentium II processor, released this spring.

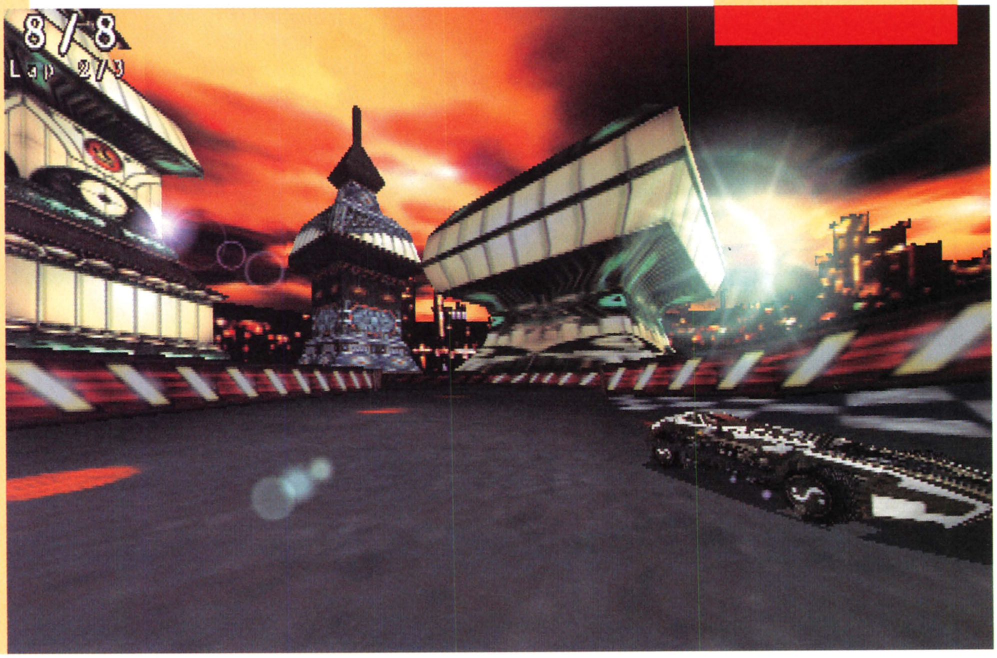
In short, the forum will provide a much needed meeting place for companies pursuing the same goal to work together. The first meeting of the OAAF was scheduled for August 26 at the Marriott Hotel in Santa Clara, Calif. (Look for details from the meeting in the next issue of Play Meter.) For more on the OAAF, check out the forum's Web site (http://www.openarcade.com).

Albert Teng, Intel's point man for the coin-op initiative, described the company's role in the forum as two fold. "One, we are a supplier of the platform, a technology supplier or enabler," he said. "I think the second role we will play is more like a cheerleader of facilitator."

As a facilitator, Intel will be able to provide support—although no concrete details were being offered at press time—and serve as a matchmaker to help push forward the business model that a PC platform would entail (i.e. a horizontally integrated market with different parties supplying hardware, software, game content, etc.)

In its function as a hardware supplier, Intel will provide technical sneak peeks or beta product tests of its newest technologies in conjunction with other members of the OAAF, and Teng said Intel is not

European-based Ubi Soft is developing an arcade game based on its consumer racing game POD.



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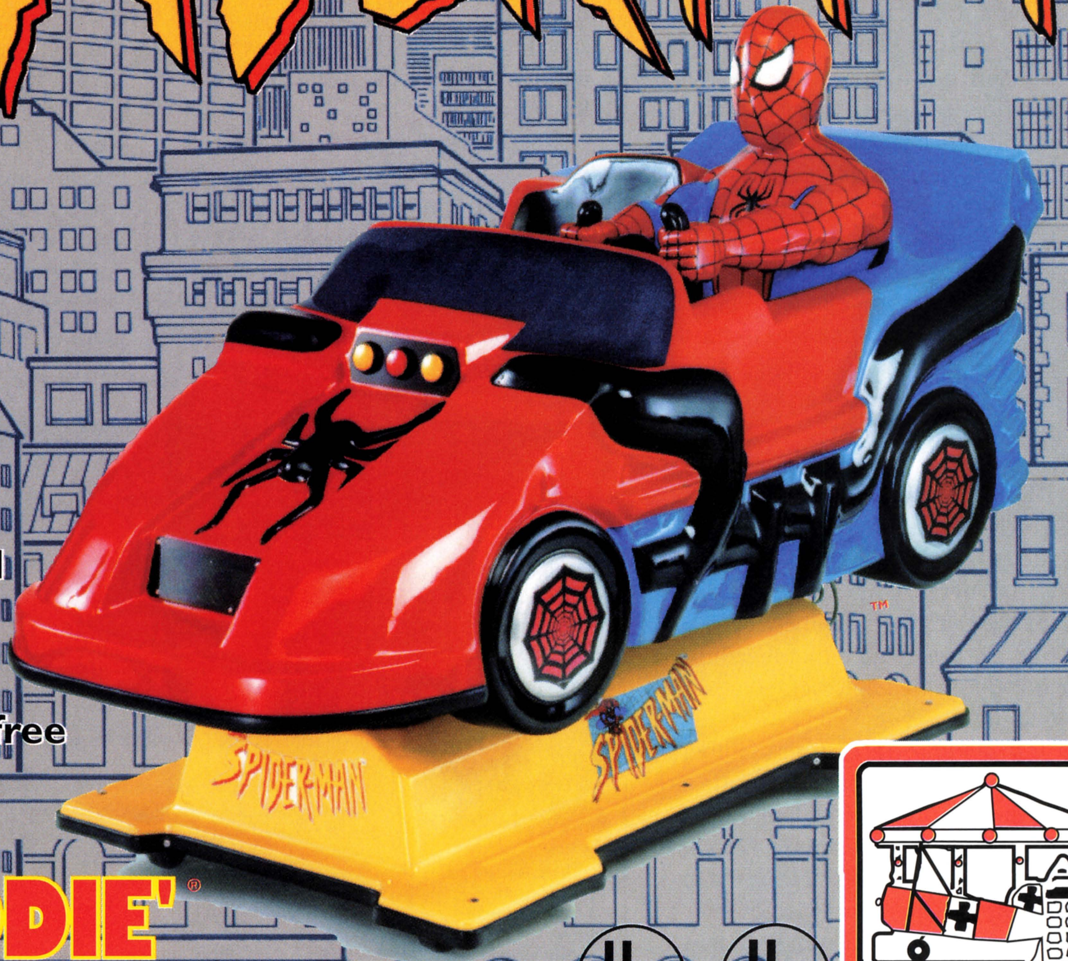

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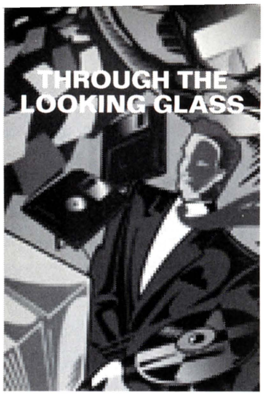


the only company looking for an environment to test out its cutting edge products. "For instance, there are lots of new, high-end 3-D graphics cards coming out this year and they are also a good source for beta testing," he noted. The arcade and LBE market "is the best test market because it's high profile and it's a limited number of sites. We've always believed these high-end products would preview in the arcade and then would move to the home."

In addition to working out technical questions between individual companies and creating a road map with emerging tools, Intel believes the OAAF will be the ideal place to forge relationships that will help push forward the distribution of hardware and software into the operating community. Distributors listed as charter members include Betson Enterprises and Deith Distributing. Total membership includes over 50 coin-op, consumer game, hardware, and PC software firms.

"It took us awhile to know all the players," Teng explained. "When it (the number of companies interested) reached this size, we found it very hard to communicate without some form of organization."

MEMBERSHIP PERSPECTIVE

The OAAF, according to its Web site, is open by invitation to professionals in the game development industry. Currently membership is free, but a fee-based membership model may be implemented at some later date.

In general, the charter members of the forum welcome the group as a way to work out the final details of a plan that has been on many industry lips since this time last year. However, several companies expressed mild to medium skepticism over the usefulness of the group.

"Intel and Microsoft are talking a lot about it but I don't see them actually doing a lot in the way of support," said one semi-disgruntled member of the OAAF. "We are really carrying the ball."

Initial membership also includes some familiar coin-op names, including Dynamo Ltd., HanaHo Arcade PC, and Namco Limited, although the Japanese-based video game giant says its membership will serve as a communications pipeline with other development companies and a resource for the newest technology.

John Klayh of the AMOA National Amusement Network Inc. (NANI) said the Intel initiative is a continuation of what NANI and Microsoft have brought to the table over the last two years in pushing for PC-based games. "Intel has now jumped in with both feet."

According to Klayh, the real issue for NANI is now to make sure the operator's perspective is taken into consideration in future discussions and to avoid any game platform, although PC based, that is too dependent on any specific hardware. "We are going to address this over the next 60 days," Klayh said.

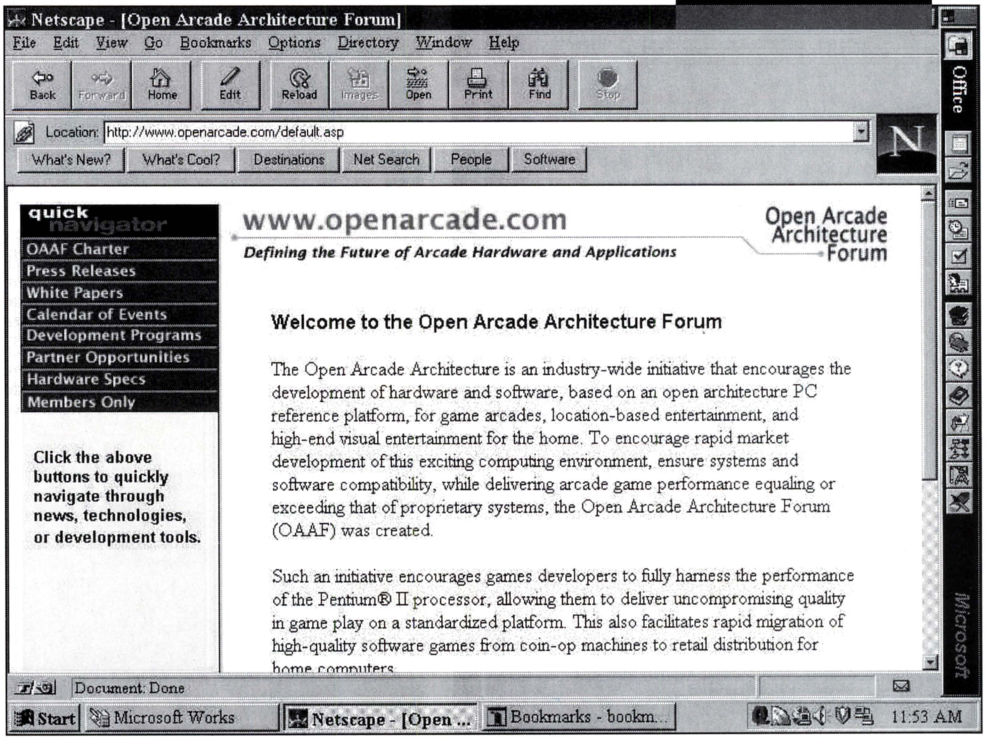
In the end, the power of the PC-based games to familiarize youth with emerging technology is what will ensure the success of the initiative, Klayh said, noting that the inventor of the rocket, Wernher Von Braun, cited Flash Gordon comics as his inspiration. "The only problem," he added, "is this industry is title driven and until you get that great game, they are not going to believe what they can already see."

Shelley Stratton of Streak Interactive Development and Manufacturing, a systems integrator with 20 years experience in the coin-op world, said her company believes a significant segment of the market will move away from proprietary platforms and the OAAF will provide a positive environment for sharing information.

"Streak can contribute a lot in terms of how these standards are implemented," she said, noting that Streak is currently working on at least five PC-game related projects. "We may not be able to overcome everything, but it can't be everything to everybody."

Steve Warme, vice president of production for the Canadian-based virtual reality and interactive entertainment firm and OAAF member The Vivid Group, agrees with Stratton. "We haven't entirely embraced it because we have a rather unusual configuration for our products," he said. "It doesn't really function for us now. Traditionally, we have tried to position our form of entertainment on the bleeding

The Open Arcade Architecture Forum's Web page at (http://www.openarcade.com).



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Open Arcade Architecture Forum

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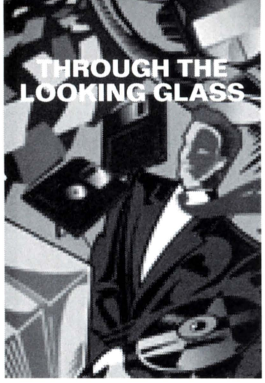
Welcome to the Open Arcade Architecture Forum

The Open Arcade Architecture is an industry-wide initiative that encourages the development of hardware and software, based on an open architecture PC reference platform, for game arcades, location-based entertainment, and high-end visual entertainment for the home. To encourage rapid market development of this exciting computing environment, ensure systems and software compatibility, while delivering arcade game performance equaling or exceeding that of proprietary systems, the Open Arcade Architecture Forum (OAAF) was created.

Such an initiative encourages games developers to fully harness the performance of the Pentium® II processor, allowing them to deliver uncompromising quality in game play on a standardized platform. This also facilitates rapid migration of high-quality software games from coin-op machines to retail distribution for home computers



edge."

However, Warme does think a PC platform will serve some game developers well. "It lets them concentrate on the quality of the application and game."

THE CONSUMER SIDE

Several companies already associated with the consumer industry, with an eye toward the arcade and location-based entertainment, take this same position when talking about the potential of a PC platform and rapidly developing Intel microprocessors.

"We are very pleased to be developing for the Intel open arcade architecture as we feel that these new systems will enable arcade games to reach a new level of quality including higher resolution, more in-depth games, and multi-player capabilities via the Internet all on a machine that can handle more than one game and can be reused for years," said Michel Guillemot, vice president of Ubi Soft, Inc.

Ubi Soft is a European-based developer, publisher, and distributor of consumer video games and one of two companies that showed arcade versions of their attractions at the E3 show in Atlanta this summer. Its arcade attraction is based on one of its current titles, POD, a futuristic racing game which is currently available for systems ranging from the Pentium 120 and up to all system with MMX technology. The company has sold over 2.5 million copies world-wide, and the final version of *POD Arcade* will include three tracks, each corresponding to a different difficult level—easy, medium, or hard.

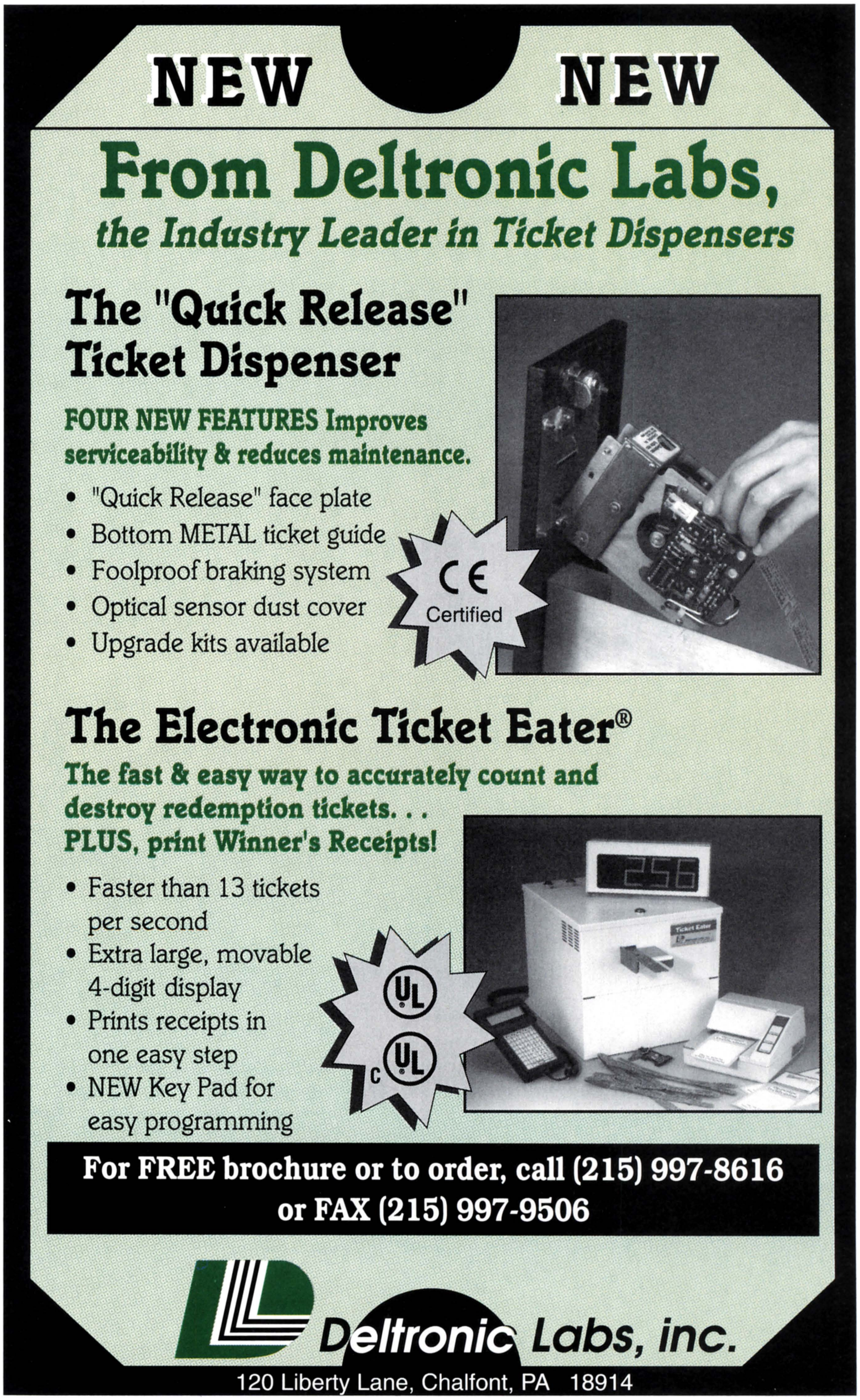
David Spencer with Sony Development said his company is also enthusiastic about working with Intel on a series of LBE attractions, which will be used in a Sony location scheduled to open in San Francisco in 1998. All of the attractions, with the exception of an Internet play area, will utilize Intel's Open Arcade Architecture.

"We will be working toward standards to more easily interface equipment so everything doesn't have to be customized," Spencer said. "You can spend your time developing fun game play instead of trying to get all the polygons in place."

In the face of these differing visions of how the new game platform will come into place and speculation over slower than expected release of PC-based titles, it is this concept of standardization that will most likely be the unifying force behind the OAAF as its members strive to blaze a new market trail.

Intel's Teng said he expects to see five or more games released by the end of this year, most likely from some of the firms that have already shown prototypes including Inner Workings, Mango Grits, GreyStone Technology, and Evans & Sutherland.

"1998 will be a critical year," Teng concluded. "We are very committed and it's going to happen." ▲



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COVER STORY

Seidel Amusement Machine Co. is gracing our cover for the first time in its illustrious history. When we asked Phyllis Seidel what she wanted as the focus of the article that accompanies the cover, here's what she had to say: "I'm sure that the whole amusement industry knows that we have been manufacturers for 37 years and that Ed's father invented the 14-foot skeeball alley in the 1920s. They surely know that Seidel Amusement moved from New York to Albuquerque, N.M., in 1967, that Ed and I met in 1987 at Blackpool Pleasure Beach during an IAAPA trip, and that we focus our business on building the best possible games and never compromise on quality."

So the focus of Seidel Amusement Machine Co.'s story won't be the past 37 years in which the company was tireless in its pursuit of quality and earned an impressive reputation. The story of Seidel is about the future as the owners turn over the reigns to those who will be just as dedicated in maintaining the integrity and reputation we've come to expect.

Ed was quick to add, "The best is about to begin! Phyllis and I have decided to turn the daily operation of the business over to our new general manager Barry Watkins, our new national sales manager Bob Rakel, and our very capable dedicated staff. That doesn't mean we won't be here, it just means that it is time for Phyllis and me to spend a little less time working and a little more time 'playing.' With Barry and Bob added to our great staff, I am confident that our business will continue to thrive. We welcome the new ideas.

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THE NEW TEAM

As Watkins assumes the responsibility of managing the company, he confided that he is in awe of the shoes he will attempt to fill. "Over the past 37 years, Ed Seidel has built this company into one of the most respected redemption game manufacturing companies in the country," Watkins began. "His dedication to perfection and detail and his insistence that only top quality parts and construction materials be used, has led to the production of some of the finest games the industry has seen."

Watkins continued, "Ed is one of the few company presidents I know who can troubleshoot his own equipment when an arcade technician calls. He has shown his equipment in over 50 trade and equipment shows, having missed only one IAAPA show in all his years in business."

Watkins feels a deep respect for Ed and the philosophy and principles that have kept the company at the forefront of the industry. "Ed has surrounded himself with a staff of talented and dedicated employees whose enthusiasm and experience mirrors his own. Because of his efforts, respect for his employees, and dedication to quality and innovative ideas, Ed has created a successful company that runs smoothly and efficiently. It is easy to understand my respect for the man," declared Watkins.

Watkins is no industry fledging; his industry career spans two decades. Armed with a degree in mechanical engineering and a job in that field, he dreaded the prospect of moving with the company he was working for. "I grew up in Santa Cruz and that's where I wanted to stay," he said. Instead of making that move, he began seeking other career opportunities. One such opportunity was with Canfield Concessions on the Santa Cruz Boardwalk. Watkins became general manager and stayed for 18 years overseeing some 20 games on the midway.

In 1990 he and a partner opened a business called Mission Bay Attractions. They proceeded to open an FEC called Prime Time in Belmont Park in San Diego which had mostly redemption games. Soon they opened a candy, ice cream, and snack business next door and called it Sweet Licks. Watkins still owns these two businesses and is proud to say they are thriving.

TOP: Ed Seidel (seated) giving expert instructions to Barry Watkins (l) and Bob Rakel.

MIDDLE: Cindy Henderson (l) and Debbie Ohler (seated) listen to words of wisdom from Phyllis Seidel.

BOTTOM: Most of the Seidel staff outside the offices on Washington Place in Albuquerque, N.M.

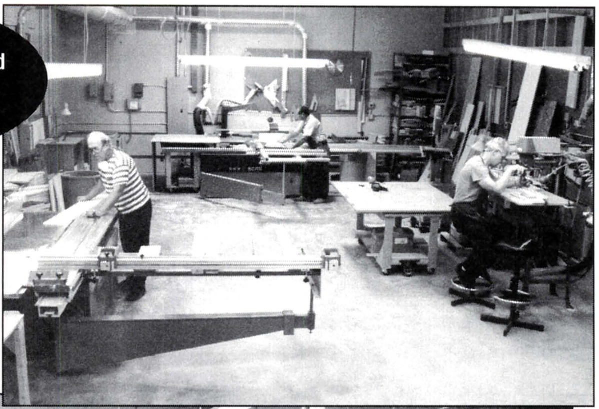
Watkins continued his winning streak in 1992 when he built a soft modular playground called Pirate's Hideaway. He describes it as the biggest in the country at the time, encompassing 12,500 square feet and rising four stories tall. "We were innovative in Pirate's Hideaway. No one had attempted to do what we did there," Watkins said. He has since sold this endeavor.

It was this hands-on experience that would figure in fulfilling a dream Watkins had—being on the manufacturing end of the business. It began when Watkins started at Canfield Concessions and there were quite a few older Seidel games. He liked the quality of the games and when it came time to update, he decided to replace them with newer Seidel models. It was then he became friends with Ed Seidel, a friendship that has lasted for 20 years. Over the years, Watkins attended a number of trade shows and was even a featured speaker on occasion.

So when Ed and Phyllis began to ponder their options in relinquishing control of the company, they looked no further than Barry. "He had all the qualities we needed in someone to run our company," Phyllis said.

Why is Watkins so excited about this opportunity? "I love to build things!" he quips. He gladly shares his goal of adding innovations and developing new ideas instead of simply taking old ideas and adding variations to them. "Ed is right when he says that the best is yet to come!" said Watkins.

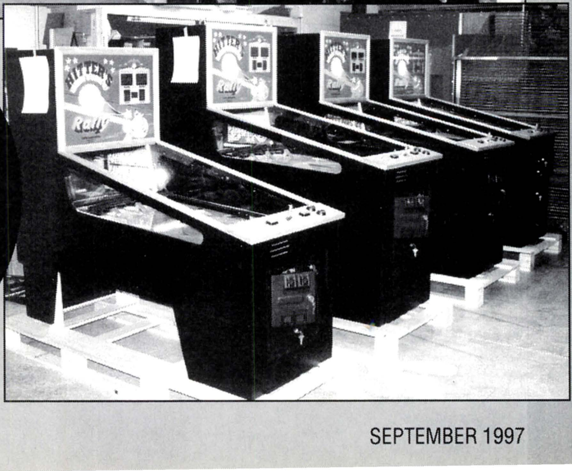
Bob Rakel came on board about the same time as Watkins, bringing with him the same enthusiasm Ed and Phyllis expected. Although he has no formal industry experience, he is looking forward to the challenges the industry has to offer. Rakel's talent as a professional referee in the National Basketball Association allowed him to meet and


A shot in the cutting and shaping department.

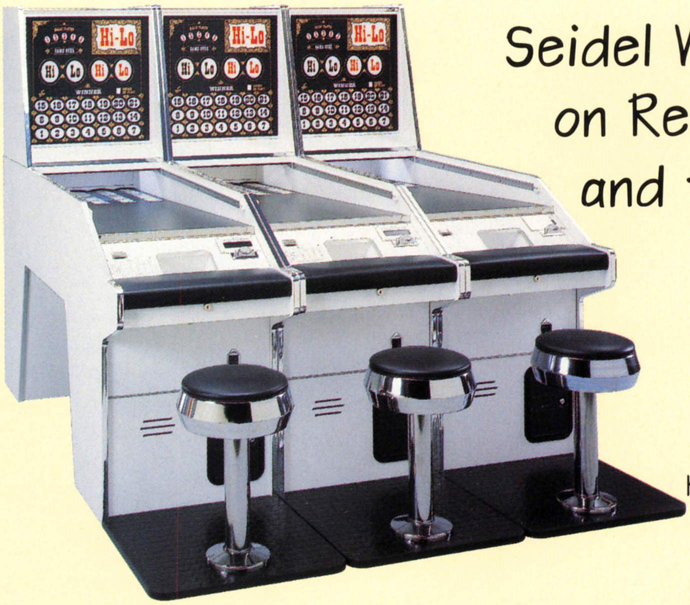
The final assembly and shipping staff, (l-r): Josh Perkins, Ralph Delgadillo, and Wade Potter.

Chuck Ohler (l) and Jay Mertens programming the Thermwood machining center for precision cutting of cabinet pieces.

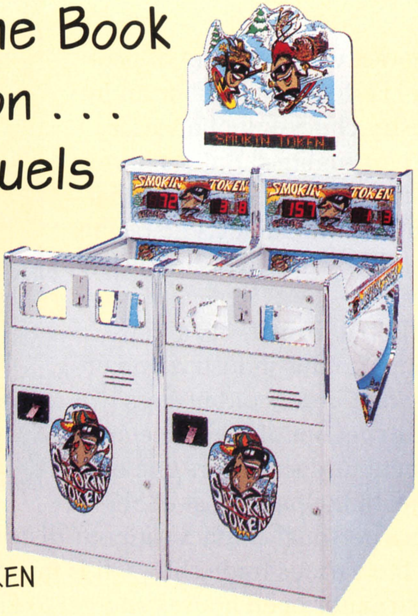
Smokin' Token and *Goin' Rollin'* on the production line for final assembly.


Hitter's Rally on the test stand. Note the shorter children's model in front of the three adult models.

Seidel Wrote the Book on Redemption . . . and the Sequels Keep Rolling Out!

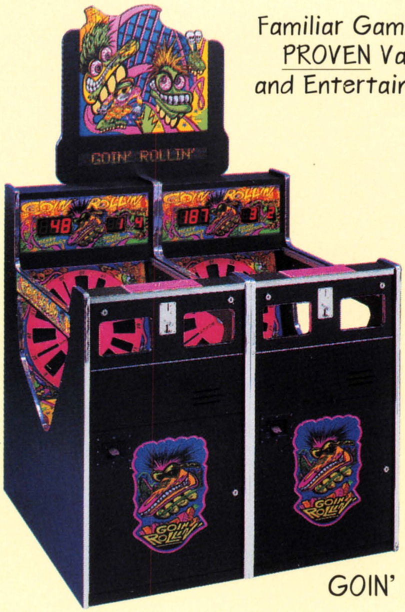


HI-LO LXI

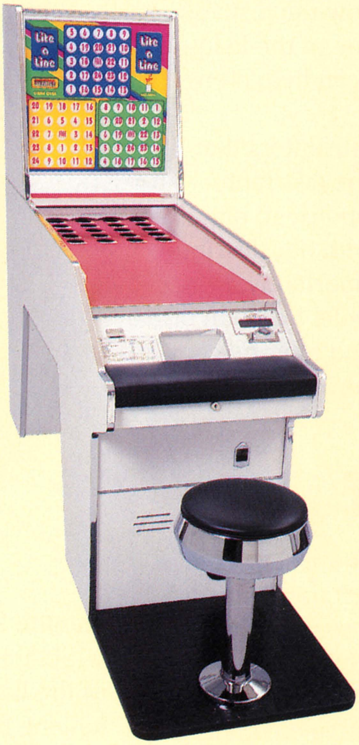

SMOKIN' TOKEN

SMOKIN' TOKEN

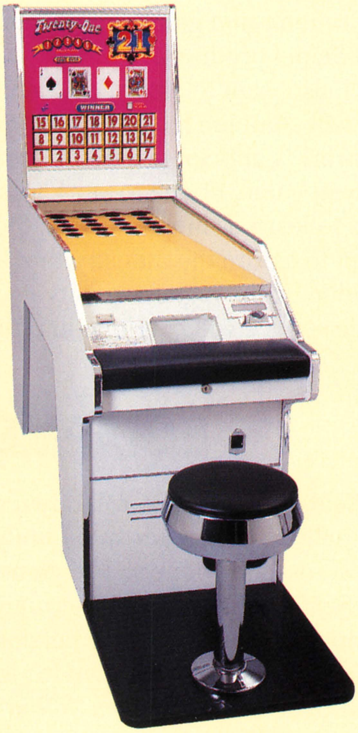
Familiar Games of
PROVEN Value
and Entertainment


GOIN' ROLLIN'

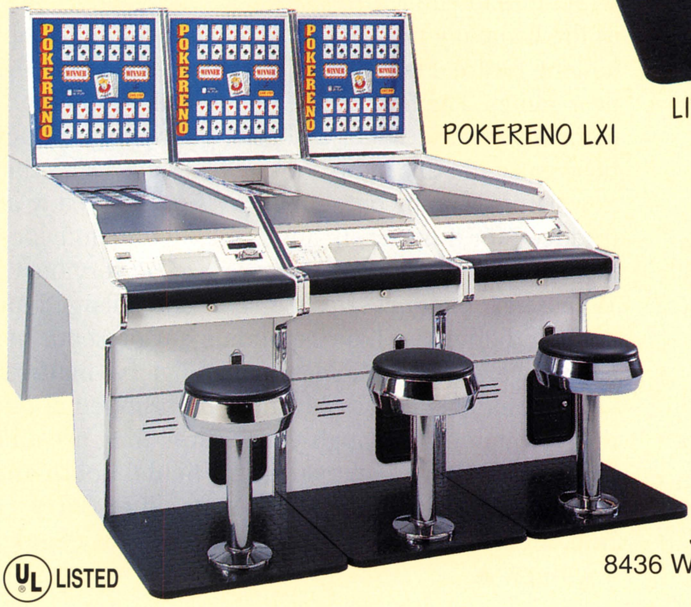
GOIN' ROLLIN'



LITE-A-LINE LXI


Twenty-One
21
WINNER

TWENTY-ONE LXI


POKERENO
WINNER

POKERENO LXI

Seidel
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UL LISTED

interact with a variety of people. Perfect qualities for an industry chock-full of a variety of personalities! But it's his extensive sales background that will be invaluable as he begins to take over Seidel sales activities.

Bob affirmed, "As a newcomer to this industry, one of my first orders of business will be to get out of the office and meet our distributors one on one. In the past, most of Seidel's personal contact with our distributors has been at the various trade shows. It is my intention to attend distributor open houses and get to know the distributors better to determine how we, as one of the leading redemption game manufacturers, can help them sell Seidel products.

"I also want to assure our valued distributors that we will continue to sell only through the distributor network. I anticipate a tremendous response to our newest game. I hope to work closely with our distributors to learn as much as I can. Most importantly, I want to assure the industry that the Seidel tradition of producing the highest quality games and offering complete service will continue into the future."

TOP: Charlie Stacel showing that uncompromising craftsmanship goes into the construction of every Seidel game cabinet.

BOTTOM: Seidel calls Betty Griego (l) and Charity Halstead "our two experts in the electronics assembly department."

EQUIPMENT

Seidel's trademark roll down games are staples in virtually every arcade and family entertainment center across the country. The games are so popular that Ed Seidel said, "Many other manufacturers have jumped in with their own versions of this decades-old favorite." Ed demonstrated his innovative creativity with *Smokin' Token, Goin' Rollin'* and most recently *Hitter's Rally.*

Smokin' Token and *Goin' Rollin',* out now about two years, have been consistent earners and very popular with players. The trend continued with *Hitter's Rally,* an interactive game with a truly American theme, baseball. This was based on a game introduced in the 1950s and features even more thrills associated with the favorite American pastime.

Watkins concedes that he is well aware of the need for new, exciting, and innovative games and said that is precisely what he intends to pursue. "It is the long-term goal of this company to continue manufacturing top of the line games. That goal also includes a dedication to full and timely service to our customers as we move into the 21st century."

Seidel's manufacturing division will be pretty busy as the company prepares for a demanding and challenging future. Plans are to introduce at least three new games. The first will be in September and the company describes it as an exciting new concept never before used in this industry. Watkins said, "With the new games coming out; our *Hitter's Rally,* already introduced for this season; and our long-time industry favorites still in demand, we expect to be very busy. With a new national sales manager and enlarged marketing program, we'll be expanding our presence more aggressively in both the national and global markets."

The Seidel staff was certainly tight-lipped about the new games, although you can tell they are all excited about them. Get over to the Seidel booth and check them out and introduce yourself to Barry, Bob, and the rest of the staff. You'll see why Seidel is a winner. ▲

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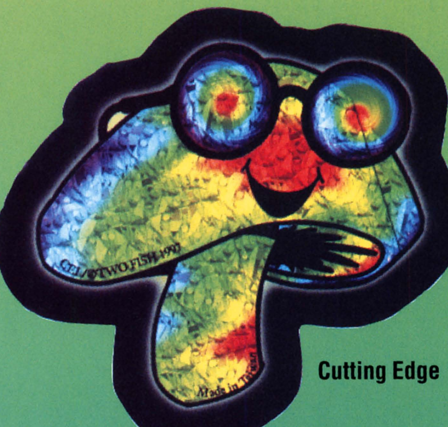


Cutting Edge

Kid's Zone

Peninsula

Peninsula

Brand

Kid's Zone

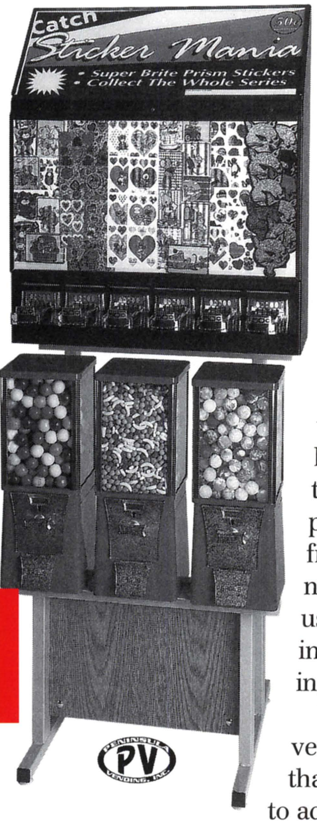
What's the catch? Absolutely none. What is this obscure machine? It's no secret. In fact it has been right under your nose for many years. It's a sticker vending machine, and it could very well be the revenue earner you've been looking to add to your route.

VALERIE COGNEVICH

Sticker vending put down roots about 40 years ago with the granddaddy of the business, U-Seal-It. The company was founded in 1958 with an entirely new concept: simple to use, wallet - size laminating plastic dispensed from a vending machine. Over the years, U-Seal-It expanded and was soon the nationally dominant manufacturer of flat vending products and equipment. Still family-owned, U-Seal-It is now operating under the direction of the third generation.

U-Seal-It's vice president of sales Eddie Lorin said that the evolution to sticker vending was a natural. "The sticker vending business has been good for many years. However, it's really more than just stickers. While the machines are traditionally used for stickers, you can also vend other flat items like pogs, pull-tabs, and whatever else happens to be hot," he explained.

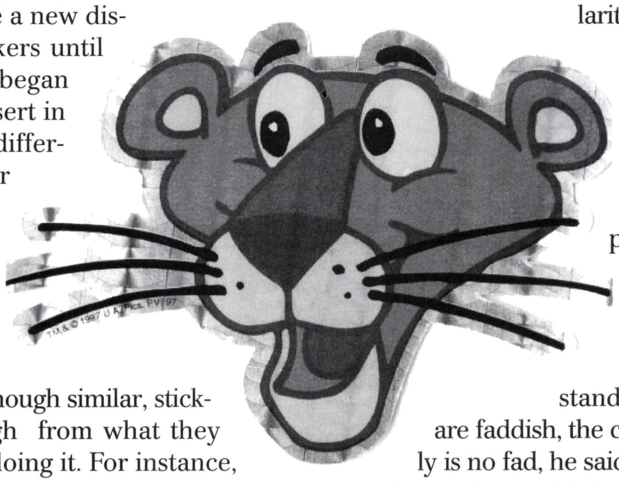
Lorin added, "Traditional bulk vendors are finally getting the gist of how viable an industry this is. Therefore, we are now making two- or three-column machines, and we can customize them." He adds that U-Seal-It manufactures stickers but has sold the majority of its route and places its emphasis on the machine itself.



Peninsula offers a variety of sticker/ temporary tattoo machines.

Neel Clark's Kid's Zone is just the opposite; the company sells stickers but not a machine. Not yet anyway, according to Clark. He said that Kid's Zone has been distributing stickers for about seven years and told us not to rule out machines in the future. His partner operates a route consisting of 50,000 bulk vending machines and through this, although he is not directly involved, Clark has a finger on the pulse of the industry. "Sticker vending is very good right now," he observed. "It's an industry that goes through cycles. In the early '80s little boys were collecting beer bottles and little girls were collecting stickers. They had books filled with them. They couldn't get enough of them."

Clark continued, "While I'm no expert in why sticker vending is hot again, I know that it's been very well accepted by other bulk vendors. It wasn't always that way." He went on to say that at one time the displays were a problem. The routeman would have to peel a sticker and place it inside the machine to show what was in the column, basically make up his own display. Then when tattoos became popular it was even more difficult because it was a reverse image and you couldn't just peel it off and place it on the machine. The real problem with this display situation, according to Clark, was that routemen were not changing the product because it was too much trouble to make a new display. They'd just leave the stickers until they sold out. Clark said, "We began printing an attractive card to insert in the column, which made a big difference. Now most companies offer this service."



You loved the "Pink Panther" movie, your kids will love the sticker from Peninsula.

A&A Parkway's Adam Ippolito agrees that bulk vendors are finally accepting sticker vending. He explained, "Bulk vendors were resistant to sticker vending machines because although similar, sticker vending was different enough from what they were doing to keep them from doing it. For instance, up until just a few short years ago, the operator had to make his own display. He'd take stickers out of the machine and hopefully make an attractive display. Now they don't have to do that."

Ippolito should know the mindset of bulk vendors because A&A is a prime example of what he's talking about. The company has been in the bulk vending business for half a century with candy, gum, and capsules. While successful as the exclusive distributor of stickers for a number of smaller distributors, A&A recently saw how good the sticker vending business was and decided to get involved.

If you want to spend time talking serious sticker vending, get John Louvitakis of Cutting Edge Industries on the phone! He's a wealth of information and is generous and patient in sharing it. When you hang up, you'll know everything you wanted to know about sticker vending and maybe some things you didn't even know you wanted to know! He related the time table of sticker vending, agreeing that U-Seal-It pioneered the industry. He observed that up until five years ago, sticker vending was basically a niche market. "The people who ran the machines usually only operated sticker machines and nothing else. But now many bulk vendors are embracing the concept?"

He continued, "Up until a few years ago, bulk vendors viewed sticker vending as nothing more than a passing fad. Therefore, they were reluctant to add them to their routes. Candy, gum, and capsule vending had been around and was an established business, and it simply didn't seem feasible to many of the operators to add something different. In fact, it was hard to talk service people into servicing sticker machines because they were different from the bulk vending machines they were used to. Another factor was the belief by these bulk vendors that even if they wanted to add sticker vending, all of the good locations would be gone."

But Louvitakis added that the resurgence in popularity of sticker vending probably has a lot to do with the image on the product. "When bulk vendors viewed sticker vending as a fad, the product wasn't as good or diverse as it is now. The product available today is outstanding. Even if some of the stickers are faddish, the concept of sticker vending certainly is no fad, he said.

Frank Pisano of Selectra is a new kid on the block, but his company has been around for over 30 years. He ex-

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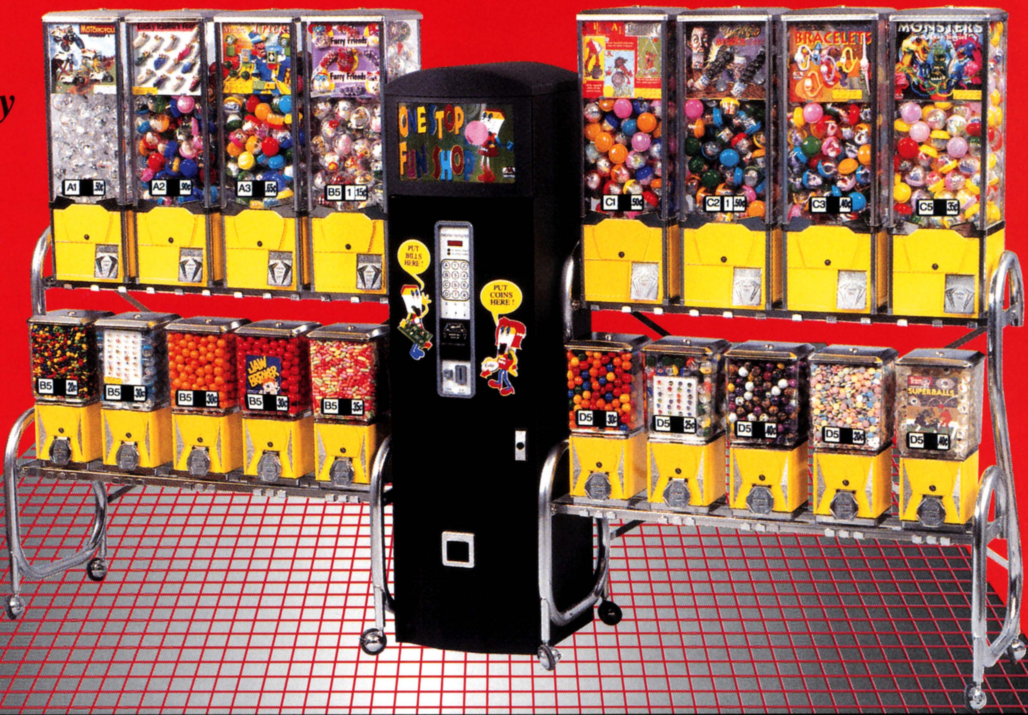

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- All parts are easily accessible
- Can be adapted to accept most foreign currencies

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U-Seal-It's line of sticker machines

plained, "I was operating a route of sticker machines and found it a lucrative business. When I heard that Selectra was up for sale, I realized that I knew the industry so well that I could do a better job. I jumped at the opportunity. I am still in the process of redesigning the machines, changing the marketing plans, and hiring new personnel. This is a wonderful business and I'm looking forward to the challenges that await me."

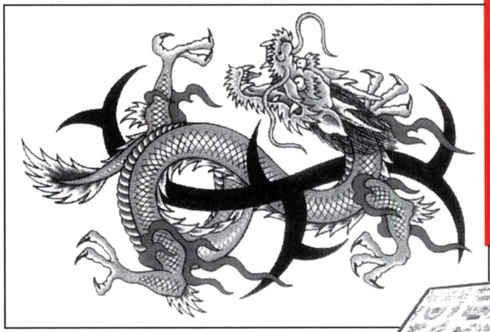
He continued, "This industry is growing. You see operators who have other types of equipment wanting to diversify. At one time this was a niche business, but it's opening up and becoming a big business for many who shunned sticker vending in the past."

U-Seal-It's Lorin heartily agreed: "This is absolutely a must for operators of other types of equipment. They are servicing locations anyway and they are missing out if they are not offering stickers. A sticker is something customers can take home as a tangible reminder of their visit."

John Nashed of Peninsula Vending also sees sticker vending as an expanding market, saying it's bigger than ever. Peninsula Vending first started in the sticker business with a route of sticker and other bulk vending machines. Soon the company began to get licenses for products and then began manufacturing its own machines. Lorin noted that most locations with bulk vending—like gum and candy—are going through a growth phase and are wanting sticker machines to expand their business. This hasn't gone unnoticed by others as Nashed pointed out, "While we are producing more machines than ever before, we are also aware of the competition that has cropped up. But we've also seen that even with more competition our sales have been high because of the demand."

Peninsula's Nashed told us that there are tremendous possibilities and opportunities to place sticker machines. "These machines are versatile for an array of locations from pizza restaurants and supermarkets to bowling centers and chain stores like K-Mart. You'd think that after making machines for over 10 years, we'd be seeing new locations dwindle. But it's just the opposite. More locations are finding them attractive. For the growing number of family entertainment centers, which cater to younger children, sticker machines are a must. However, kids are not the only customers. We hold licenses for sports characters and other items that are appealing to adults and do well in adult locations."

Nashed noted that one of the reasons many operators were reluctant to add sticker vending was that it was generally perceived as just for younger kids. However, he expanded on the adult prospects out there for things like sports items. "No one is immune from stickers and temporary tattoos," he pointed out. "If you have a location, you must be creative and imaginative in what you vend, but there's something for everyone, even adults."

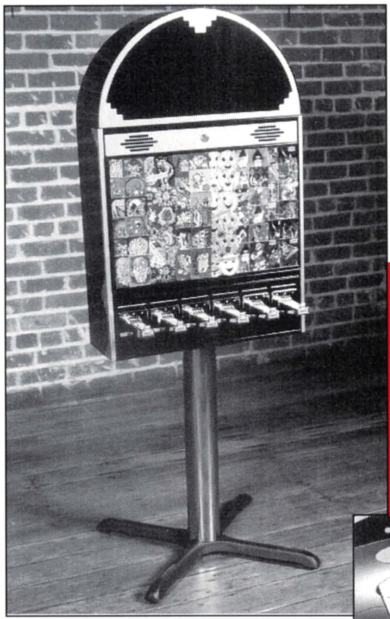


TOP: This temporary tattoo is a hot item from Brand. BOTTOM: Temporary tattoo and sticker machine from Brand.

Selectra's Pisano is in agreement, as he explains, "It used to be that all you saw were kids up to about seven or eight years old putting their money in the machine. But that age group has expanded. Those in their 20s and 30s are finding many of the stickers and temporary tattoos appealing. Some of our tattoos are designed specifically for teens, who are buying them in droves. When compared to a real tattoo you can hardly tell the difference. They can try it out and see if they'd really like to get a real tattoo."

Randy Brand of Brand Imports has been involved in the sticker vending industry for eight years and agrees with his colleagues that the sticker

business is booming. He describes his claim to fame in two words: temporary tattoos. "I knew that there had been sticker machines around for many years and all they had was stickers, and not all good ones either. My background was in imports, and while in Taiwan I got together with a printing company to discuss manufacturing tattoos. I wanted a high-quality item, so I imported high-quality ink from Japan and had the tattoos printed on quality paper. To show how convinced I was that a quality temporary tattoo would attract sales, I risked everything I owned—my house, car, etc. I remember the first ones were a panther, a dragon, and an eagle. Now some 200-plus designs later, I'm proud to say that we breathed new life into the faltering sticker vending business."



Brand is convinced that the sticker vending business is not complicated. In fact, he thinks it'll be a good investment for just about anyone willing to give it a try, as he explained, "After eight years I sold my route to someone who didn't know anything about sticker vending. That was 13 years ago and the business is doing better than it did back then. And they are the same machines!"

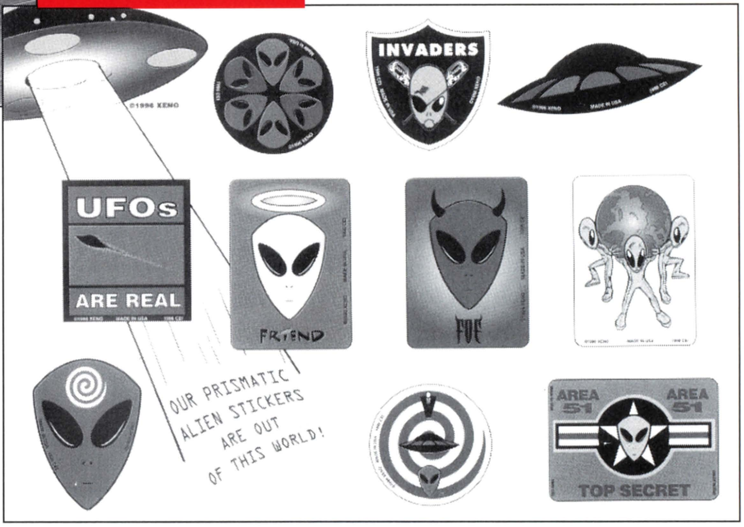
Brand got his start in sticker vending in conjunction with two traditional vending companies that concentrated on traditional coin-op equipment like video games, pinballs, jukeboxes, etc. They really didn't want to deal with inventory, which was required with stickers and any other type of bulk vending. Brand picks up the story: "Since these traditional coin machine operators didn't want to deal with bulk vending at all—including sticker machines—I agreed to place my machines in their established locations and pay them a commission. One of my selling points was that it would be an advantage for them because they could promote themselves as full-line vendors. That arrangement had a lot of appeal to coin-op amusement operators."

Cutting Edge's Louvitakis points out that once bulk vendors began seeing the popularity of sticker machines, they were convinced they'd better operate them or risk losing revenue in their other bulk vending machines. These operators were resistant to sticker vending because they didn't want to make a commitment not knowing how the machine would do in a location. Louvitakis said, "Once bulk vending operators realized sticker vending wasn't a passing fad, and at the same time were seeing the machines pop up where they had other types of bulk vending equipment, for economic reasons they began to add them to their routes. The whole business, like any business, is return on investment. Bulk vendors began to study their options," he noted.

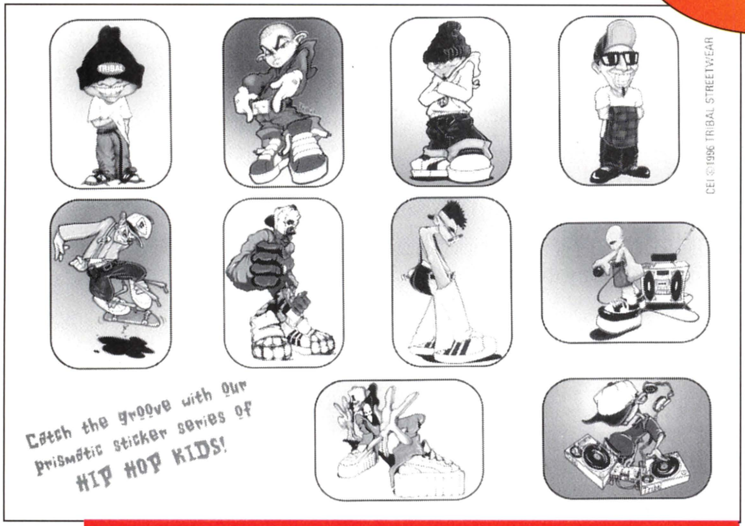
Once the bulk vendors set the acceptance of sticker vending in motion, Louvitakis explains how Cutting Edge addressed operators' reluctance to make a commitment in a location they weren't sure of. "We recognized that bulk vendors were starting to look seriously at sticker vending, but were still a bit hesitant. We made it easy for them by making a two-column, front-loading unit that would fit nicely on a bulk vending rack. They could test the waters, so to speak, without making a big investment. If it didn't work, they could simply put the bulk vending unit back on the stand; if it worked just OK they could leave that one unit there without further commitments to sticker vending; and if it worked great, they could add another unit and a stand and get into it in a big way. This way operators had flexibility."

TOP: Cutting Edge's attractive machine

BOTTOM: Cutting Edge offers this alien assortment shown on this display card.



Louvitakis added that it wasn't long before operators began calling with stories of how well the sticker vending units were doing. Now they were really convinced and wanted bigger machines with more columns. Cutting Edge obliged with a six-column unit, but more innovations were on the way. The company was now on its way to making life much easier for route operators in service and stocking their units. How did Cutting Edge accomplish this? Louvitakis provides the answer, "The basic design of the sticker vending machine had been around virtually from the beginning. It was difficult and time-consuming to stock the machines, especially if there were a number of machines on the route. The routeman had to balance a box of stickers on his knee or place them on the floor. Then he had to bend over to pick up stacks of stickers, and hold the column


Catch the groove with our prismatic sticker series of HIP HOP KIDS!
CEI © 1996 TRIBAL STREETWEAR

The Hip Hop Kids are popular from Cutting Edge.

open to place them in the machine.

"If a routeman had to stock dozens of machines, it involved a lot of bending over and the worst part was chewed up fingers from sliding the stickers into the column of the machines. The new design made that obsolete, as Louvitakis relates, "Our design makes it so much simpler to load and unload stickers as well as changing a coin mechanism. To stock an older machine, you would grab about an inch-high stack of stickers and slide them into the machine by dragging them down through a slot in the center of the column. That's how the fingers got torn up. We made our front loading machine so that the door is actually a work area when open, so there is no more bending over to pick up product. In addition, there is a removable piece allowing the operator to place as many stickers in the columns as he can hold. It takes a fraction of the time to stock plus it's easy on the fingers. I could go on and on about our new designs but suffice it to say, our machines are a big improvement over previous designs."

Peninsula's Nashed also stresses machine design: "When we first started making our own machines they were based on previous machines that had simply been updated. Over the years we got a lot of feedback from our own route and our customers. We incorporated many of those ideas into our machines to make them more user-friendly. For example, the way our machines are made have a more pleasing style and the parts are much safer. There are no sharp edges. The early machines, with their sharp corners, were actually dangerous. We made our machines safer and easier to operate."

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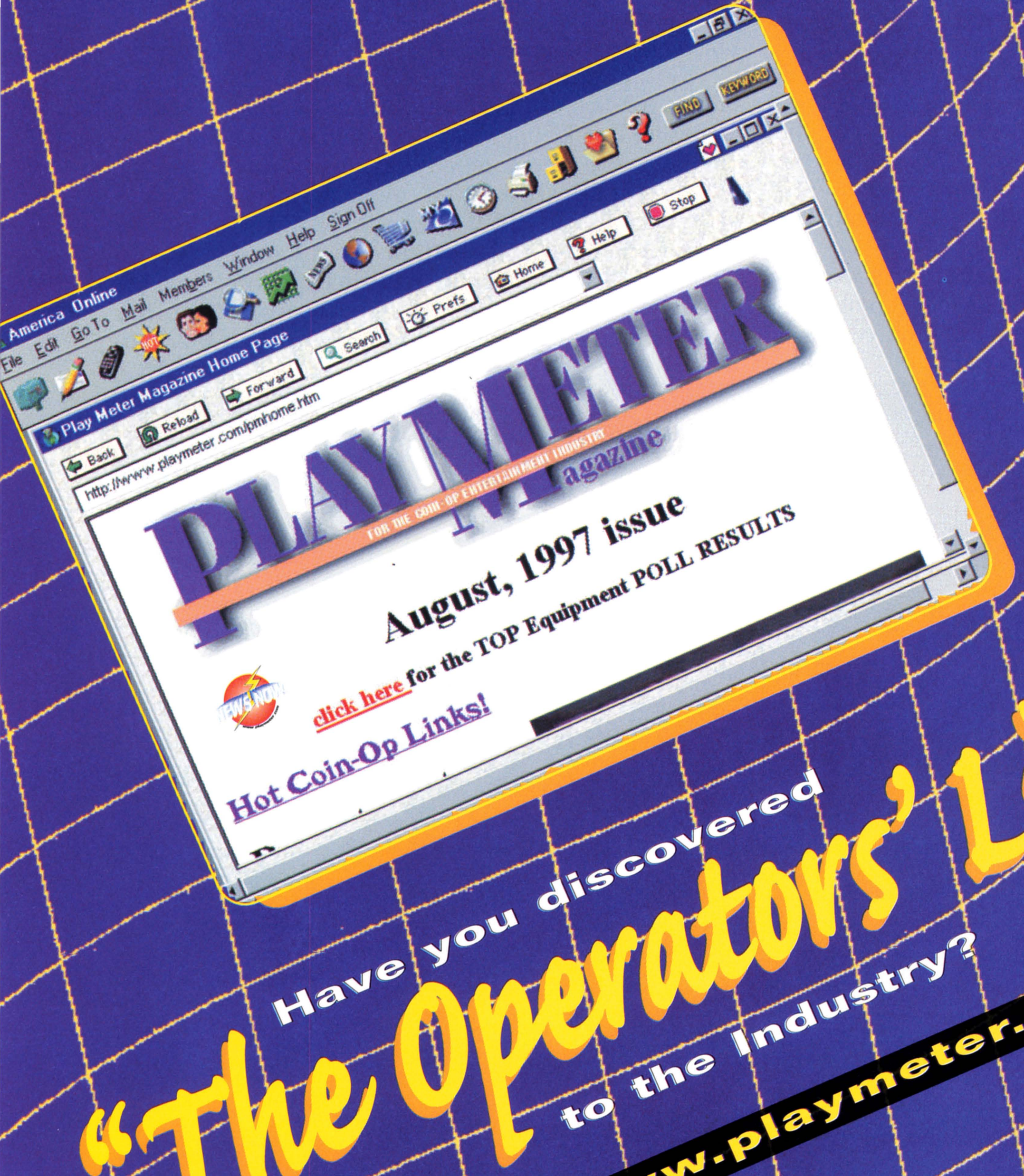
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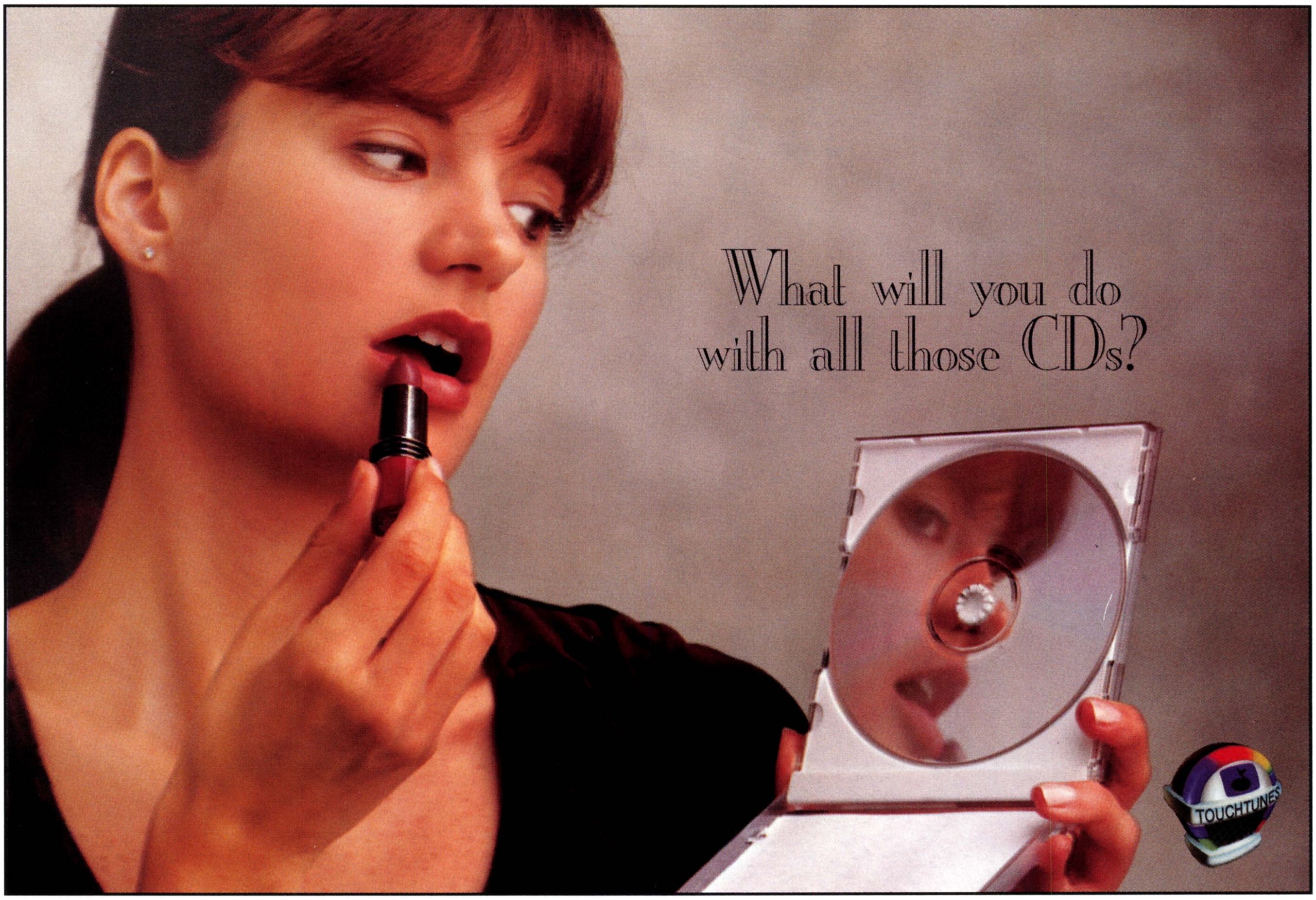
“Shiver my timbers,” beckons Peninsula’s Pirates sticker.

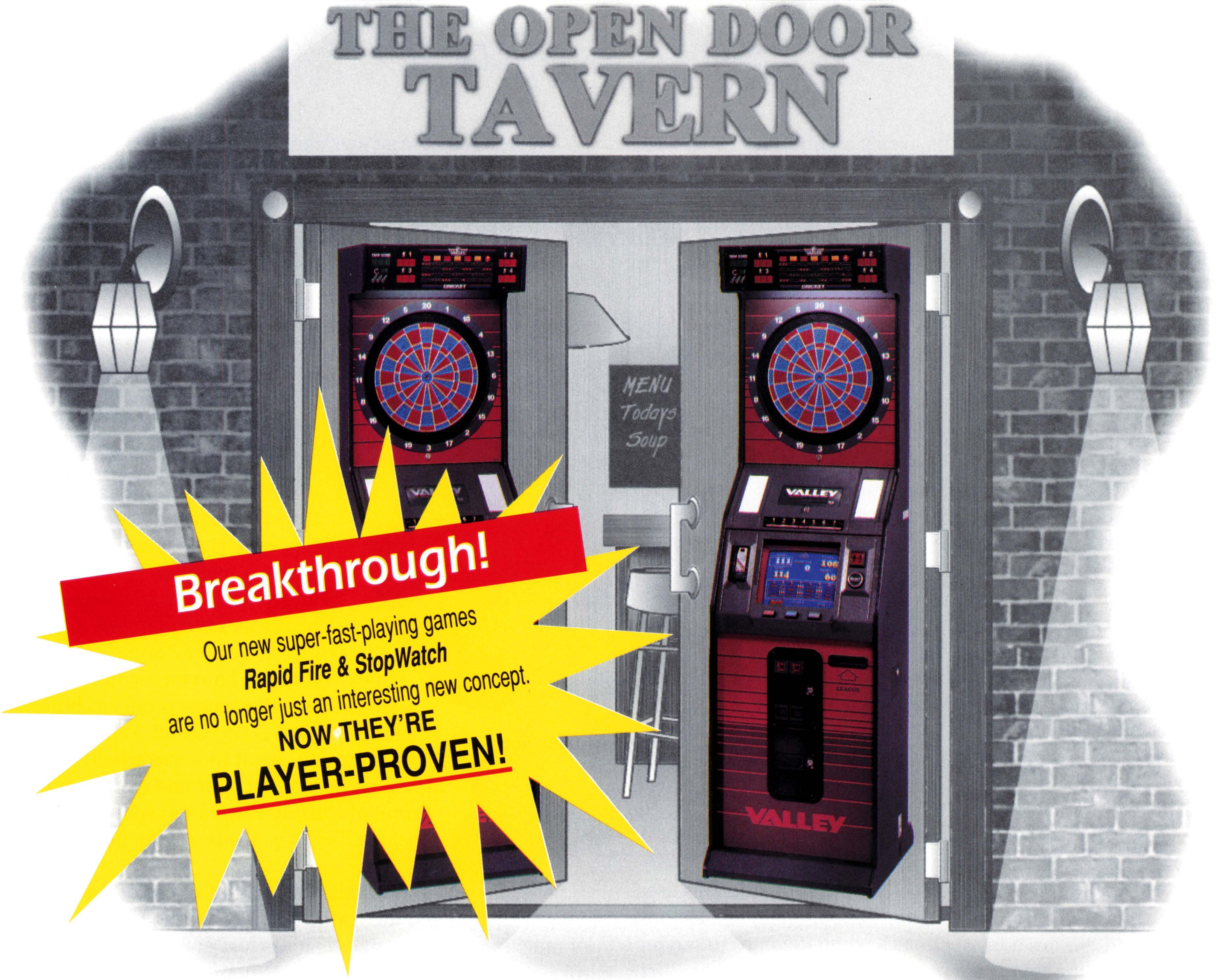
adding sticker machines sooner and are on your way to the phone to call some of these manufacturers, it’s time to study what to vend from your machines. The options are nearly endless, but here are a few of the really hot items.

First, a note about the product available. The sticker industry had been besieged with bootleg product proliferating throughout the market. However, about three years ago there was a crackdown and a few companies were sued for selling unlicensed product. Since many got burned because of illegal activity, today the majority of the product is legitimate. There are very few willing to suffer the consequences of illegal activity. They are hesitant to do anything illicit.

Kid’s Zone’s Clark emphasized that sticker vending is merchandise-driven. But he cautioned that you must be prudent in purchasing your items, as he explained, “If you make a bad buying decision in sticker vending, often you’ll have to eat it. In other bulk vending areas a bad decision is not quite so critical. For instance, say you make a poor purchase in capsule vending. You can simply add that item into a general mix with an assortment of items. With stickers, if you make a bad purchase your only alternative would be to discount one of the columns in your machine to sell them. But you’ll take a loss.”

Kid’s Zone has both licensed and generic product. It holds sub-licenses for Looney Tunes, Harley-Davidson, Grateful Dead, Superman, Tiny Toons, and gargoyles to name a few. The company also has a line of generic items that are selling well—alien babies and Tie Dye. Clark said, “I could buy Looney Tunes and Harley-Davidson all day and I’ll know that if they don’t sell today, they’ll sell tomorrow. You can’t go wrong with this product. While most of the items are geared toward boys, like the car series and the low-riders, there are





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also some for girls. Adults aren't a good market because they are probably having their tongues pierced and getting a real tattoo. However, one item that does extremely well with adults is the laminating product."

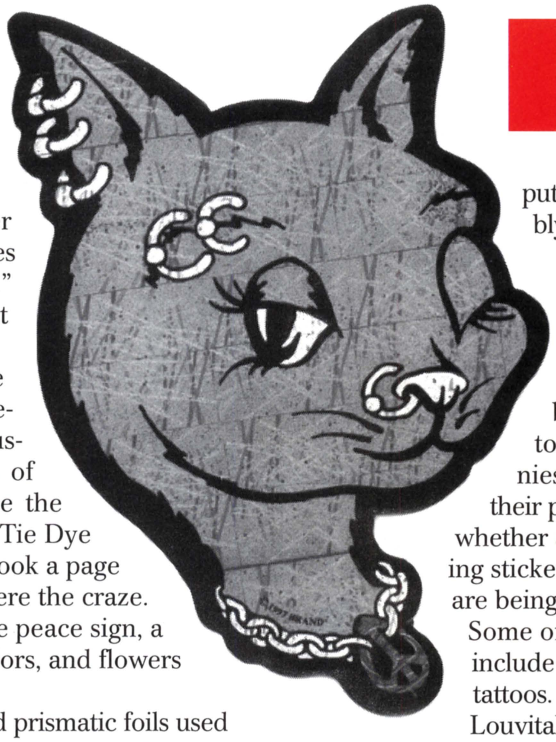
Peninsula's Nashed told us earlier that his company is one of the few that make items perfect for adults, "We hold licenses for an array of sports and cartoon characters. And we have other items that are not just for kids. Granted, sticker machines are basically aimed at the younger crowd, but there are also opportunities for locations with an older clientele." He added that Peninsula also has a vast list of generic stickers.

Brand reiterated the attention he pays to quality, but adds that the designs must be ones that appeal to customers. "We have created a series of stickers that I am convinced will be the hottest selling line in 50 years! This Tie Dye series has kids going crazy. I guess I took a page from the '60s when Tie Dye shirts were the craze. This series includes frogs flashing the peace sign, a VW bus painted with psychedelic colors, and flowers with a peace sign in the center."

He added that the bright colors and prismatic foils used are an example of Brand's commitment to quality. He noted that there are a lot of choices when it comes to buying stickers, but advised against settling for inferior product. Here's why, according to Brand, "We see items out there using really cheap paper. It makes us vow to offer kids some value for their money with the high quality foil and paper. This brilliant foil makes the machine so attractive," he said. "If a child pays 50 cents for a sticker or a tattoo, he should get his money's worth. That way he'll be back. We encourage collecting all of the stickers in a series. In fact, the stacks are collated so that if a child wanted to, he could buy 10 or 15 stickers in a row and have the entire series. Kids also love trading these with their friends. I've seen them stand in front of a machine, put in their money, and try for a certain image."

In addition, Brand is offering a line of stickers he describes as unbelievably popular called Homies. Brand originally saw this design on T-shirts people were wearing at a show. Brand figured that if people were paying up to $15 for a T-shirt with this design, surely they'd buy stickers. He was right, as he offered, "If anyone has locations in Hispanic neighborhoods, this line of stickers will sell like crazy. And adults love them as much as the kids."

Brand noted that his company comes out with new, exciting designs every month, and added, "These flat goods don't take up much room, so an operator can easily stock some of the more popular items that he may rotate through his machines. But don't make the mistake of leaving stock in the machine waiting for it to sell. The product must be rotated at least every month. The biggest pitfall for operators is when they put product in a machine and don't go back to make changes. It will literally kill sales. Some items do well and then sales slow down. Take that item out and hold on to it for awhile. Then put it back again later and it'll probably do well again."



"Come on up and see me some time, big boy," says this pierced kitty sticker from Brand.

Cutting Edge's Louvitakis said that there are many lower quality stickers in the market as people try to maintain profit margins as competition increases, but he doesn't recommend trying to skimp on quality. "Some companies will try to convince you to buy their product. But repeat orders indicate whether a sticker is successful. When buying stickers, you want to know which ones are being purchased over and over again." Some of Cutting Edge's hot selling items include Tie Dye, aliens, smiley faces, and tattoos.

Louvitakis added that the size of the location and the traffic flow determine the number of machines and the size. "This is just one function of return on investment. A location without a lot of traffic certainly wouldn't warrant six-column machines. Once you keep in mind that the product must be constantly updated and rotated, you'll understand the importance of matching the machine with the location."

Louvitakis offered this one last piece of advice: "An expected concern from operators is with inventory. You don't have to stock much inventory. You want your supplier to stock for you. He should have sufficient stock so when you order it can get to you quickly."

ADVICE FOR NEWCOMERS

Brand sums up the decision to add sticker vending by calling it "a sensible investment." He embellished on that thought: "If you had $400 to invest and put it in a Money Market drawing a 10 percent return per annum, at the end of the year you would have made $40 on that investment. If you took the same $400 and invested it in a sticker machine and your return was 40 percent on a very conservative estimate of only $100 in gross sales each month, at the end of one year you would have made $480. That's over 10 times what you would have made in your Money Market account."

The initial investment to become a sticker vendor is anywhere from $400 to $1,000 for one machine. Everyone we talked with agreed that you can expect the machines to have a lifespan of 15 to 20 years and probably longer. And the best part is the income. It's all you want it to be—consistent.

"The biggest surprise for me when I first got involved with sticker vending," noted Peninsula's Nashed, "was the revenue. Being ignorant of the sticker vending business, I had no idea of the revenue these machines can make. When you see one in, say, a pizza parlor, you're probably thinking there's $5 or so in the cashbox. Think again. That machine makes hundreds of dollars and is more lucrative than you'd ever imagine. It's a multimillion dollar business, and like many others, I just didn't fathom that."

He continued, "There is one major difference between a video game and a sticker vending machine: the video game has one game and once it's not being played there are few options other than removing it from the location and replacing it with another game. With a sticker vending machine, you still have to update, but it's the product you change, not the machine. The machine stays in the location practically forever and yet you can still offer something new for the customers."

Cutting Edge's Louvitakis agreed that it is a lucrative business, adding, "I'd advise anyone looking into this to be conservative at first. You don't have to buy a hundred machines. Try one. But once you determine that it's right for you, be aware that it can be harder to operate just one or two machines than 10 or 20. With more machines you can divide your accounts into A and B locations and then buy accordingly. You don't have to buy everything for every location. You can try different things in different locations. If something doesn't work in one place, move it somewhere else. Buying the product is important so buy conservative and ride a winner."

Louvitakis addressed a concern he's heard from prospective customers—vandalism. "Some have expressed concerned that kids will buy the stickers and then stick them all over the location's beautifully painted walls. Well, I'm here to assure them that it just doesn't happen. When kids pay 50 cents for these stickers they want to collect them or decorate their belongings. They aren't going to pay to stick something on the location's walls. Now when someone passes out free bumper stickers of some sort, those are used in malicious ways. But not stickers."

Kid's Zone's Clark adds, "I would tell anyone that sticker vending is something that they should seriously consider. However, I would issue words of caution and tell them to start small and see how it does. Remember that sticker vending is a product-driven business, so what you buy to vend from the machines will decide whether you'll be successful."

Selectra's Pisano has this advice: "It's not a complicated business. One you have locations, which operators do, then it's a matter of buying the correct size machine and choosing the right product. We sell product in the Bible Belt and to truck stops. Obviously, very different product is going to be sold in each one. In the truck stops we may sell mean-looking tattoos or a series that includes nudity. Of course, you won't see these in locations with children. It's up to you to know which will do good in which locations."

U-Seal-It's Lorin offered these words of wisdom, "Although this type of vending is primarily for children, don't count it out if adult locations are your major focus. Also, I've seen machines used for other things including meal tickets in prisons and pull-tabs. When choosing your product, I think that as time evolves everything gets more sophisticated. People have more expensive tastes and aren't going to settle for inferior product."

A&A's Ippolito said it's easier than you think, as he explained, "Take your existing locations, add sticker vending, and watch your sales go up!" ▲

For more information on sticker vending, here are the addresses and phone numbers of those who shared their ideas for this story.

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John Nashed
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Randy Brand
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(800)653-8301

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U-Seal-It
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Suite F
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(805)882-2222

Vending Supply Inc. (VSI)
6347 Meadow Crest Circle
Reno, NV 89509
(800)315-9849

Putter's Paradise

MINIATURE GOLF COMES OF AGE

BONNIE THEARD

There is a saying in the golf community: "Drive for show, putt for dough." The key to scoring is putting, and successful putting facilities find that by supplying the right setting they can reap financial rewards from a game that is truly a family sport.

Chalk it up to the influence of Tiger Woods. Or the Putt-Putt Golf TV series on ESPN. Or the search for a way to relieve stress in our hectic society. Whatever the reason, the level of interest in the sport of golf is on the rise at country clubs, on driving ranges, and in the world of miniature golf. Frequency of play is increasing across the board.

Burdette Bremer, director of marketing for Castle Golf, zeroed in on the appeal of miniature golf: "The wonderful value of miniature golf is that all members of the family can participate, and it has some time duration to it. Miniature golf provides good value for the length of the playing experience, usually 30 to 45 minutes." Castle Golf has been designing, constructing, and managing miniature golf courses for over 25 years.

Mini-Golf Inc. vice president of marketing Joseph J. Rogari says, "The fact that anyone can play miniature golf is a big advantage. In the last six to eight years more family fun centers have been popping up and miniature golf seems to be the anchor for many of them. Not everyone can water ski, but people in their 80s can play miniature golf."

Rogari's family has been in the miniature golf business since 1956, first owning and managing miniature golf courses and driving ranges and then designing and manufacturing portable prefab courses.

Harris Miniature Golf sales manager Patrick Boylan sums it up: "The great thing about miniature golf is it appeals to a wide market. What other activity brings the family together interacting with each other on every age level?"

HISTORY

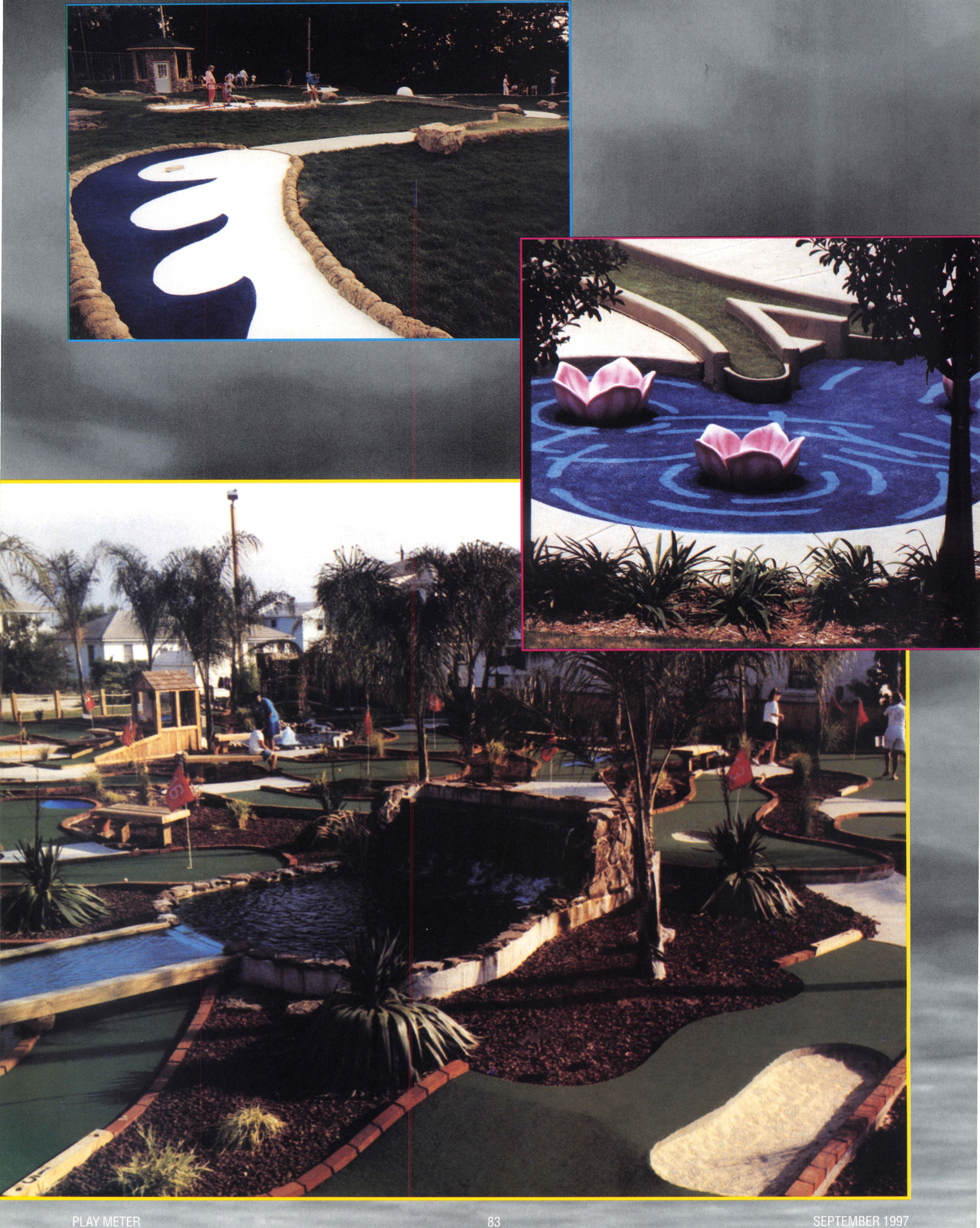
Literature provided by Lomma Enterprises dates miniature golf back to the late 1920s in Chattanooga, Tenn., started by Garnet Carter. The game became popular during the Great Depression, a poor man's

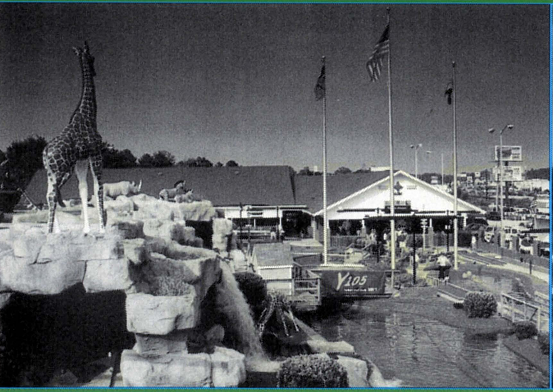
Opposite page from top to bottom:

The Wave Hole by Entertainment Architecture provides a transition to the bumper boat pond.

Colorful turf and themed holes like this one at Fantasia Gardens (surfacing by Sportexe) are gaining in popularity.

This Harris Miniature Golf course on a 90' x 100' property includes the beauty and challenge sought after today.





Putt-Putt Golf & Games in Augusta, Ga., where the beach concept met Putt-Putt.

Champions Golf & Games in Colorado Springs, Colo., designed by Castle Golf, has rocks, landscaping, and much more.

Victoria Park in Salem, N.H., designed by Adventure Golf Services, features Challenger Industries' sand-filled carpet.

country club in troubled times.

After World War II, in the early 1950s, Lomma founders Ralph and Al Lomma opened their first course in Scranton, Pa., adding obstacles that contributed to the game's success. Today the company produces modular courses as well as upscale on-site courses.

Gary Knight, executive vice president of Lomma, says, "The obstacles of days gone by are pretty much just that. The whole industry is going to a putting game with more elevated shots, all the way to a triple dogleg. You don't have to have the bells and whistles for the kids. Remember, these kids are growing up on computers. If we think a windmill will make an impression on them we are mistaken."

For longer holes with a lot of challenge, Knight likes a balance with some less difficult holes "because we don't want to take away a child's chance to score a hole-in-one. The mix of holes is extremely important."

Mark Nicholls, president of sports surfacing and golf supply company Sportexe, reflects on the changes: "It started as inexpensive family entertainment. The first courses were very small, typically with wood or concrete curbs, dimensionally structured. Today it's not that at all. There are more putting challenges not on flat courses, and it's attracting golf enthusiasts of all ages."

EARLY VS. CURRENT

"In the past there was big play for the simple type courses, ones with gimmicks and props," says Peter F. Olesen, president of Peter F. Olesen and Associates, a firm that specializes in master planning for complete entertainment facilities. "About 10 to 15 years ago people started going for the large adventure type courses that involve bridges, stairs, and elevation changes.

"Miniature golf is going more to a realistic type of course, well-landscaped, with believable attractions and themed around nature rather than gimmicks. We try to make the course interesting, challenging, and appealing so everyone enjoys the course and it is a full family experience."

Now, almost every miniature golf course has landscaping and water, the more the better, according to Arne Lundmark, president of Adventure Golf Services, a company that has designed, constructed, and operated miniature golf facilities since 1975.

"We've come full circle," he says. "We used to have windmills and clown faces. There are a lot of those courses around still doing well. In today's society we have the updated version with animatronics and fog systems. The emphasis is on rebuilding and re-inventing courses. But the idea is still the same: we are trying to entertain our guests."

STYLES

Garden- and adventure-style courses are currently the popular styles. Bremer (Castle Golf) describes the garden course as one "that is mostly made of rockscape, waterscape, and landscape," and a true adventure course as one "that has a story line theme for the true elements of an adventure. You can't have an adventure if you don't have a story."

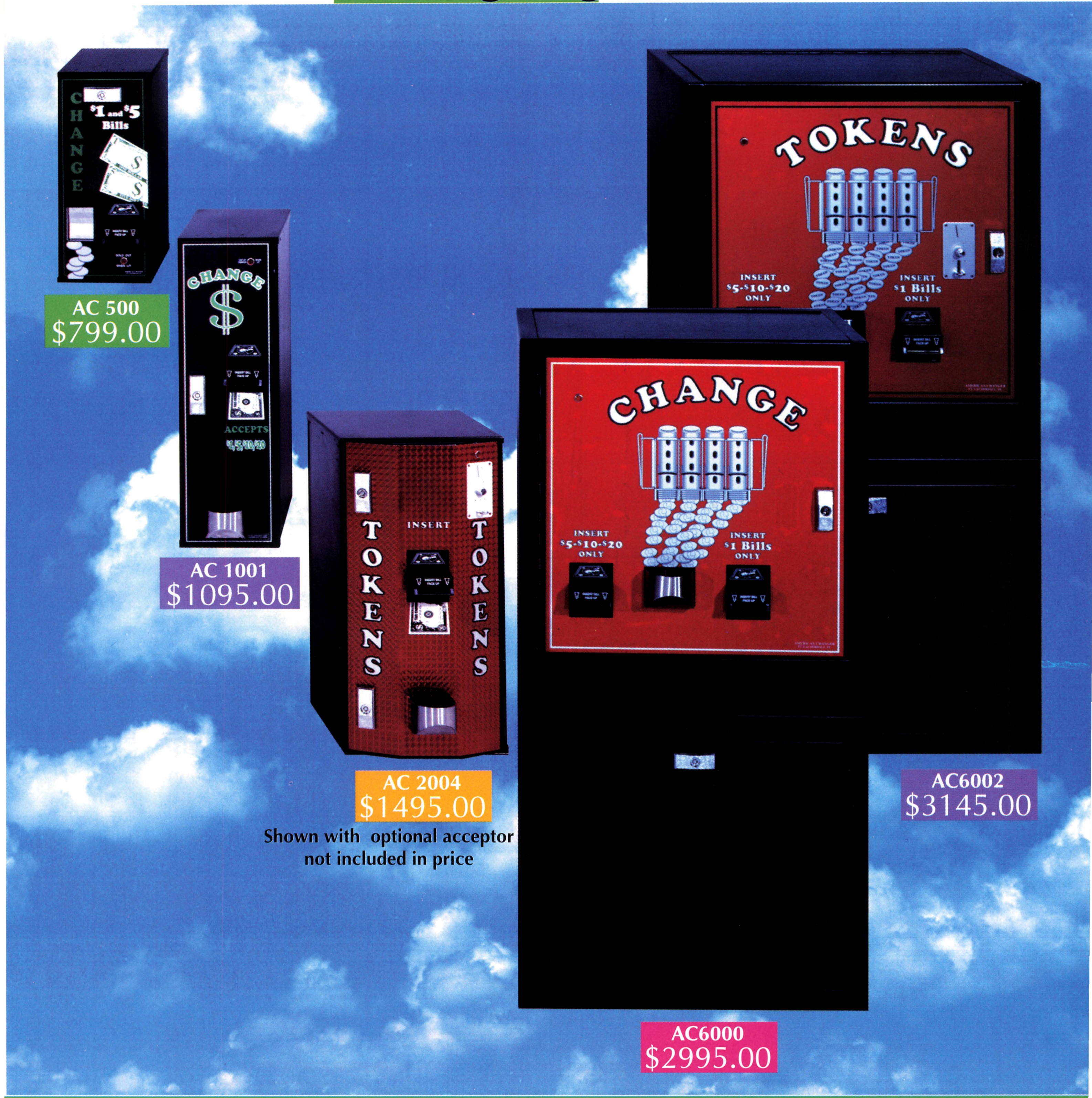
Bremer is seeing a lot of interest in the garden-style course, although for more entertainment value customers want to add more theme considerations.

Olesen's company is getting more requests for country club-type miniature golf courses where the holes are larger and require a little more skill. "Par has gone up for those courses," says Olesen. "More of our clients want this type of attraction rather than a simplistic one."

Bremer sees a movement toward larger entertainment complexes in general, megaplexes with an enormous assemblage of recreational venues, almost entertainment malls. Says Bremer, "These places are doing elaborately themed miniature golf and children's play arenas, perhaps also laser tag, skating, and party facilities. There's enough to take a person through a five- or six-hour entertainment experience."

Harris Miniature Golf is still having success with garden-style putting courses with holes that play more interestingly with breaks in the greens, contours, rough turf, sand traps, and water. The company has 40 years of experience constructing on-site courses, both adventure-style and garden-style.

We're changing the industry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An elaborate Putt-Putt Golf & Games in Beirut, Lebanon (installed by Southern Golf Distributors).

A free-form course by SGD at Rinky Dink Golf near Akron, Ohio.

Celebration Station in Tampa, Fla., has both Challenger Industries' glued-down surface (right) and sand-filled surface (left).

Harris' Boylan says, "An interesting course will get players coming back. A challenging (i.e. more difficult) course may frustrate some people. The holes are typically longer in a garden-style course. It has to be played differently, not necessarily harder. An adventure-style course usually has major elevation changes and uses a lot of artificial rock work."

Harris is known for its work with water systems that add interest to the courses. A videotape available from the company emphasizes this point ("There is something relaxing about the sound of moving water.") and the advantages of newer courses ("Those built on a number of elevations allow natural buffers from one hole to the next."). "Miniature golf is a great business," says Boylan. "The choice of style just depends on what course is best suited to your site."

While most courses are located outdoors, Bremer (Castle Golf) feels that indoor golf courses can be very successful. He adds: "The course must be high quality with a lot of entertainment value."

Rogari (Mini-Golf) sees indoor fun centers popping up with more frequency. Fifteen percent of Mini-Golf Inc.'s courses are now indoors. Rogari suggests a variety of different types of shots and a lots of landscaping: "People are getting more creative with landscaping and dressing up the courses and making them look fabulous. We set our courses for just as much luck as skill so the less athletic person can compete with the good athlete."

The company offers a new Pro Putters Series in its prefab courses that features rolling hills and undulations usually seen only on cement courses. Mini-Golf Inc. has courses in 17 foreign countries, including China and Israel, and all over the United States.

Larry Lloyd, president of Southern Golf Distributors, says, "We occasionally build a traditional flat course, but the vast majority of owners wish to have elaborate theming with waterfalls and intricate holes that are more challenging and larger. That's not necessarily the way they should be built, but that tends to be what they're looking for. The pendulum has moved from the conservative approach to better and wilder."

Southern Golf is the designated supplier for Putt-Putt Golf Courses of America and also does courses for independent operators. The company has been in business since 1957. Lloyd has seen a lot of changes in this market: "There are a few things you have to address now that you didn't have to address 10 or 15 years ago. Most Americans have been conditioned to controlled atmospheres (air-conditioning in particular). Miniature golf is adding creature comforts such as fog and mist units that reduce the heat, also indirect shade to make people more comfortable."

Scott Anderson of Southern Golf says the company gets many calls for indoor courses as an innovation, but he adds, "The square footage requirements and the cost of that space usually makes it prohibitive."

TRENDS

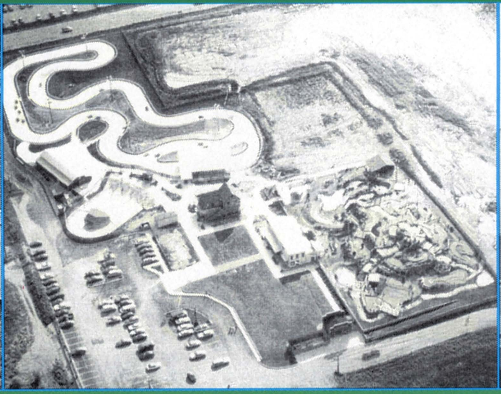
"What's kind of interesting is that in the last few years, as game rooms have been trending down, we've seen more creativity in golf promotions and ideas," says Mark Ross, director of franchise service and national tournament director for Putt-Putt Golf & Games. "This year, while games are predominantly down, we've made it up in the golf course."

Why has this happened? Ross theorizes: "There are driving games, fighting games, and redemption games. Our customers are not challenged enough in the game room so they've headed back towards golf. Golf is definitely 'in.' Players are moving away from video and turning to golf, laser tag, and bumper boats."

Putt-Putt Golf & Games has been around since 1954. There are 240 franchises in the system in the United States and eight company-owned stores. Typically the holes are simple in looks and based on the founder's views that holes must be designed so that every hole can be a hole-in-one.

Simplicity notwithstanding, since 1987 most of the emphasis at the company has been on theming. The first location to exemplify that is the Putt-Putt Golf & Games in Augusta, Ga. Ross terms it "where the beach concept met Putt-Putt." A thriving tournament organization has been around since 1959, and a TV series since 1960. Ross advises that $205,000 in prize money will be awarded at competitions in 1997.

A portable prefab course from Mini-Golf Inc. in Baldwinsville, N.Y.



Aerial view of Action Territory Family Fun Park in Bristol, Wis., by Peter F. Olesen and Associates.

Modular courses by Lomma Enterprises can go anywhere, here on a rooftop in South Beach, Fla.

Cost of Wisconsin sales and marketing director Chris Foster informs, "There is a demand for more themed courses above and beyond just a nicely landscaped course. Last year 50 percent of the courses we constructed had some sort of theme, whether it was a prefab unit or one constructed on-site. We can add sound effects to the courses with motion sensors under the turf or in the cups to create sounds appropriate for the theme."

The company has done over 28 different themes, from Old West to outer space and dinosaurs to haunted trails. Still, Foster says, "The most exciting theme is one that's never been done before. Our sculpting department can come up with unique and different ideas if the client is open to suggestions."

Cost of Wisconsin gets more calls for adventure-style courses built on-site. However, Foster adds, "When people realize what the construction costs are they sometimes choose the prefab unit. Cost of Wisconsin also has a portable nine-hole system for special event planners.

SGD chairman Don Nelson credits Myrtle Beach, S.C., and the West Coast as being instrumental in bringing themed courses to the forefront. SGD, which has been in business since 1961, designs miniature golf packages of the free-form style, not the adventure type. The company also manufactures and distributes putters, fiberglass figures, and other golf supplies, as well as operates a five-acre fun center with 36 holes of miniature golf.

"Over the years we've seen our fiberglass figures being moved off the playing area and placed as decorations," says Nelson. "The adventure-style courses are 90 percent scenic and 10 percent playable. Our approach on design is not to get people through quickly but to offer challenging play."

Another trend is away from metal putter heads that can damage turf, stone, and players. Nelson points to the superior wearing qualities and safety of SGD's urethane putter heads for their popularity with operators. "Damage caused by chrome- or metal-head putters is a real deterrent."

Frank Kohuth, president of Eastern Golf, introduced rubber safety putters in 1988 that cut down significantly on injury to players and to the courses, as well as reduced vandalism. Eastern Golf has been around since 1930 manufacturing and distributing golf equipment and supplies to driving ranges, miniature golf courses, pro shops, and specialty stores. It also has design engineers on staff to produce architectural renderings and conceptual plans. Plus, Eastern operates two FECs in the Poconos.

Bremer (Castle Golf) also sees a trend to "the democratization of golf," bringing family recreational activities to golf driving ranges. Bremer explains: "There is a movement to a shorter golf experience. Golf takes half a day. Given the constraints of time, people are looking for a 90-minute activity. Nice driving ranges, miniature golf courses, and other family attractions work together to produce a good 90-minute experience."

David White of Challenger Industries agrees: "We're seeing a move to incorporate FECs and driving ranges together to create a sports recreation facility."

Opportunities for linking driving ranges and miniature golf were few and far between in the past. According to Robert McGuffey of Entertainment Architecture the two industries draw different crowds. He adds, "Miniature golf cannot support extremely valuable real estate. Golf courses and driving ranges have real estate. Now the two can be combined, with something for the serious golfer and something to draw the rest of the family."

Entertainment Architecture designs and builds miniature golf packages in conjunction with MGC developers in Connecticut. Unique projects are a specialty, such as the new Exploration Place in Wichita, Kan., a children's museum and science center with 18 holes of miniature golf. One of the company's sports-themed courses in Michigan features greens with cutouts like soccer balls.

Kohuth (Eastern Golf) says, "There are certain attractions that fit together like a glove. Driving ranges and miniature golf are made for each other." He feels that miniature golf also combines well with bumper boats, a game room, snack bar, and a railroad train around the golf course.

WackyPutt of Quebec, Canada, put a permanent smile on the face of miniature golf in 1993 by surprising and amusing players with gadgets and pranks such as electronic tees and water sprays at unexpected moments. The compa-

Themed holes at Fantasia Gardens in Orlando, Fla., feature OmniGrass by Sportexe.

WackyPutt's banana-shaped putters and pranks brought humor to miniature golf.

Close-up of Challenger Industries' glued-down carpet at Congo River in Orlando, Fla.

ny's concept is played out in modular hot pink fiberglass platforms for each hole, banana-shaped urethane putters, banana-shaped scorecards, and audio tapes of funny music.

WackyPutt director of operations Robert Longtin explains:

"Our president and inventor Pierre Desjardins had a miniature golf course and saw that people were getting away from the simple style golf. He thought adding humor would bring players back. We combine golf and jokes because all people love to smile. We think we have a good thing going." WackyPutt has 25 locations in Quebec, two in Ontario, and two in the United States (Salt Lake City, Utah, and Nashville, Tenn.)

SURFACES

Turf can be glued-down or sand-filled. Sand-filled started in Europe on soccer fields and tennis courts. "We use more sand-filled than anyone," says Lundmark (Adventure Golf Services), "yet we predominantly use glued-down surfaces. Sand-filled doesn't have to be glued down but needs routine maintenance to keep the proper level of sand. It has a tendency to get fast (which some owners want). Glued-down surfaces are slower but do not last as long—three years under strong attendance figures—while sand-filled will last five or six years or more. Sand-filled is not as easy to change out."

David White is the national sales manager for Challenger Industries, a company that has been making artificial turf and artificial putting surfaces since 1984. He explains that some of the surfaces are made of continuous filament olefin, now used by facilities that had the earlier surfacing product known as flat needlepunch. Challenger also offers sand-filled turfs that are taller, loosely constructed, and top-dressed with sand.

White says, "With the sand-filled products you can get a putting surface that putts the same as a natural grass surface. You can make the holes fast or slow. This is in demand in the golf training facilities primarily, such as Jack Nicklaus Golden Bear Golf Centers."

White notes that most of his customers—builders, designers, and mom and pop operations doing their own courses—still prefer traditional green turf. He adds, "Since the most noticeable thing in play is the turf, it's the first place scheduled for an upgrade as the facility matures."

Themed surfacing has come about in the last 18 months says Nicholls of Sportexe, which surfaced the Fantasia Gardens miniature golf facility at the Epcot resort area of Walt Disney World. This site is an example of theming at its grandest. "The realistic course has more playable surface than a football field," says Nicholls.

Nicholls notes that "rather than having one-dimensional holes, now when you step up to holes there is a special theme. For example, a musical theme would have carpet cut to look like sheet music." He sees a move away from one theme and only green golf carpet. Sportexe can provide "every color under the sun." The company is known for its OmniGrass sports surfacing that has the look and feel of natural grass.

ADA COMPLIANCE

The Americans with Disabilities Act is having an impact on miniature golf design. Some industry members feel that 100 percent accessibility will be difficult to achieve and may change the nature of the game.

"A lot of people are doing courses of accessible and non-accessible holes," says Olesen (Peter F. Olesen & Associates). "Our philosophy is that all 18 holes should be made accessible. In doing that we have not had to give up waterfalls and other features. Elevation changes cannot be as abrupt in this case."

McGuffey (Entertainment Architecture) advises working with local organizations that represent the physically challenged when planning a miniature golf course.

ROOM FOR GROWTH?

In the early '90s real estate prices were low, a perfect situation for the development of land-hungry FECs that needed space for miniature golf, go-karts, batting cages,

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“Real estate prices are not a deterrent in a good market,” says Lundmark (Adventure Golf Services). “What we're seeing is that more people are careful with their investment, matching their investment in the course with the potential size of the market. And that's come about through education in the industry.

“From a supplier's perspective there is still a lot of miniature golf activity out there in terms of both new courses and renovations to bring courses in tune with current thinking. Still, more miniature golf courses are up for sale. They were either in poor locations, not designed well, or not managed properly. Miniature golf operations would do well to take a lesson from theme parks: always add something you can use to promote the park, get people in, and give them a new experience.”

Lundmark views miniature golf as a “traditional, family togetherness activity that's a great leveler since children have as much chance of landing the putt as an adult. And, miniature golf adds to the length of your guests' stay.”

> ***“Understand your market, be prudent, and have enough capital to do well what you plan to do.”***

The Myrtle Beach, S.C., resort area draws millions of visitors annually so it is no wonder that the vicinity can support over 50 miniature golf courses. It has been called not only the miniature golf capital of the United States, but of the planet! Recreation expansion beyond the seashore is resulting in the construction of more deluxe courses. Clearly, the public is enamored of miniature golf.

COSTS

The complexity of the plans dictate the final cost. Here are some general guidelines on what to expect for an 18-hole course:

A typical garden-style course will start at $150,000, while the adventure-style course will be more in the range of $225,000 and up. Modular prefab courses range from $14,000 to $30,000, with some up to $45,000. Portable systems (nine holes) are about $20,000.

“The nice thing about modular systems is that you can adapt them to your square footage,” says Knight (Lomma Enterprises). “You can fit 18 holes of miniature golf in as little as a 3,000-square-foot area.”

Nelson (SGD) takes the practical approach: “Waterfalls and mountains are very attractive but increase the cost tremendously. There is a place for these features. In year 'round climates it's a natural, but in the north, unless you are in a highly populated area, you have a big investment and sometimes the numbers don't work out.

“If you are a contractor you can build your own course for $75,000 and it can be appealing. Add $2,000-$3,000 for landscaping annually. Customers nowadays like a lot of landscaping, flowers, and water. You don't necessarily have to have a waterfall. A pond with a pump, fountain head, and liner will give you the sound of water.”

Nelson also suggests: “Treat miniature golf as you would a retail business. You need a location similar to one for a theater complex or fast food franchise. Oftentimes the price of the real estate does not justify that type of location. But if you stay on that same highway (preferably four-lane), and move a mile or two away from the city where the property prices are lower, you let the city come out to meet you over the next five years. Obtain a long-term lease or a lease with the option to purchase.”

“A lot of people want an FEC concept, but they must be mindful of the costs involved,” interjects Foster (Cost of Wisconsin). “Most of our customers start with miniature golf, an arcade building with games, and possibly another small attraction and build out from there.”

Nicholls (Sportexe) makes these observations: “People are building courses that cost $1 million; that's ridiculous. They are under the impression that bigger is better. I don't envy someone entering miniature golf because it's gone off the scale. Back in 1991 it was doom and gloom. Manufacturers were discouraging people and many were talking about competition. People trudged off on their own and made bigger and better courses but didn't make it. You don't have to have the biggest or even the nicest. The goal is to make money. If I build one for $50,000 and run it successfully, I'm better off than the guy who spends twice as much but his return is not as good.”

Don't forget the little things, says Nicholls. “A course loses about 125 dozen balls a year, but the average location doesn't budget for it.” He recommends selling balls or bumping up the price of the balls and giving them away at the end of the golf along with a key chain screw. Consider it a piece of advertising if your logo is on the balls (a dozen balls are $6; chains are one cent each). Also, factor in water bills if the course has a water system.

SOUND ADVICE

Burdette Bremer (Castle Golf): “Understand your market, be prudent, and have enough capital to do well what you plan to do. Respect your customers and show it in your product. The wonderful value of miniature golf is that all members of the family can participate, and it has some time duration to it. Miniature golf gives a good value for the length of the playing experience.”

David White (Challenger Industries): “Use quality materials going in. Your single biggest purchase every four to five years is the turf. The life ranges from three to six years, depending on traffic and depending on competition (keeping up with the look of facilities around you)."

Patrick Boylan (Harris Miniature Golf): "People get wrapped up in the building and financing areas and once they open the doors they don't have a plan for how to run the facility or what marketing to do. Miniature golf gets such an overwhelming response that facility owners will have to be prepared.

"You can't just throw money at the project. You must know who your customers are and gear your facility accordingly. There is a difference between a good business and a great business. If you advertise, market, and cater to groups you will have a great business."

Chris Foster (Cost of Wisconsin): "First, find a good location. Second, find your target audience–residential or tourist. Third, find a good company to start a relationship with to take you from the conceptual stages through the final design and operation.

Don Nelson (SGD): "One thing that people often overlook is getting a market study. They simply cannot fail to get it, but so many do not heed this advice. You need to know where your prospective customers are, also their age, income level, and how many are out there. This information is readily available for very little money."

Gary Knight (Lomma Enterprises): "If intentions are to open a little family fun center, we recommend miniature golf as your anchor. All the other attractions make money, but miniature golf is the one amenity that everyone in the family can enjoy."

Larry Lloyd (Southern Golf): "Do a definitive market study and purify the market numbers (from a gross population figure not everyone will be a player). Take your competition into consideration. Factor in advertising; you can draw people to you beyond your area of dominant influence, but you must spend money to get them there."

Scott Anderson (Southern Golf): "There has been too much of 'if you build it they will come.' It's all about location, proper prior planning, and hard work. Today's challenge is to analyze your situation and get the right attractions. We want diversity in our society and want to have all our senses challenged. And that's the difficult part of an FEC."

Mark Nicholls (Sportexe): "If you're planning a course in a population area of 120,000 and there are already three courses, another one probably won't make it." Also, "Kids enjoy miniature golf, but in the end they don't pay for it. If you don't attract the parents you won't get them back."

Frank Kohuth (Eastern Golf): "Buy enough property for expansion. And when you go before the zoning board have a five- or 10-year plan with everything you could possibly think of having in your FEC. This way the zoning board may knock out one or two attractions, but you will get 90 percent of everything else you want.

"Set your pricing structure properly to draw the type of clientele you desire. If the place is clean, safe, neat, and fun, it will do well. Finally, remember that we're in a fun business. Be happy; keep that in mind." ▲

Developer's Checklist

❶ Is your site highly visible and conveniently accessible? The top three rules of real estate development are still location, location, location.

❷ Are there other complementary leisure activities nearby? Miniature golf is rarely a destination attraction and critical mass equals profitability.

❸ Do you know who your customers will be? Invest in an independent feasibility report and spend time at similar facilities tracking the guest attendance patterns and their ages.

❹ Can you survive at 75 percent of your annual attendance projections? You could have a new competitor in your market in 60 days.

❺ Is your thematic concept adequately unique to draw market share from your competition? Hint: write a newspaper article on what's special about your facility.

❻ Does your theming convey a complete story line or is it just a collection of props? Authentic decor and interactive special effects are now the standard, and integrating locally significant events into your theme can be a distinguishing feature.

❼ Does your course design comply with the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) law? Get involved in the review process of the Recreation Advisory Task Force Recommendations.

❽ Have you budgeted for an additional attraction element each year? Theme parks build their annual promotional campaign around their new rides and events.

❾ Have you itemized your operating expenses? How many hours will you be open each year, how many employees are required, what are the local utility rates, etc.?

❿ How are you planning to attract groups? Does your program include activities for every member of the family? Hint: picnic tables increase impulse sales and a sports theme attracts teams, leagues, and sponsors.

Compiled by Entertainment Architecture of Indianapolis, Ind.

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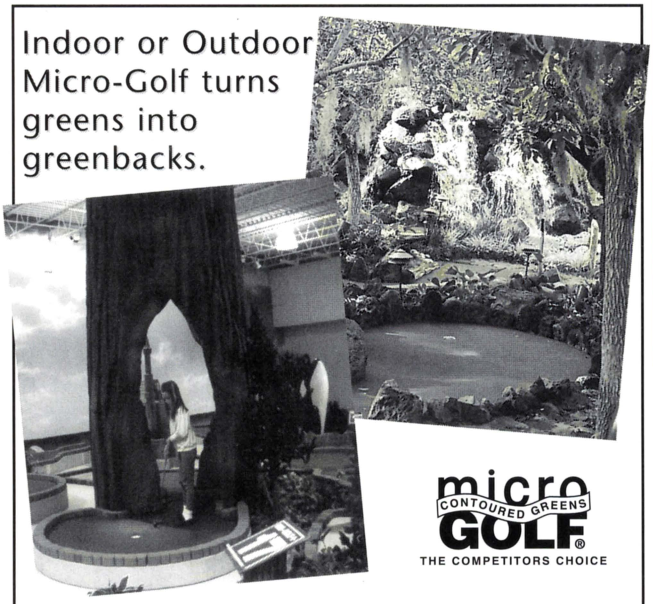

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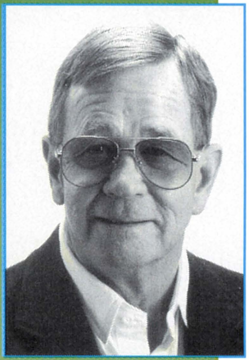
MGAUS formed to help operators

As reported in the May issue of Play Meter, professional builders and suppliers for the miniature golf industry have formed the Miniature Golf Association of the United States for the express purpose of addressing the needs of owners and operators.

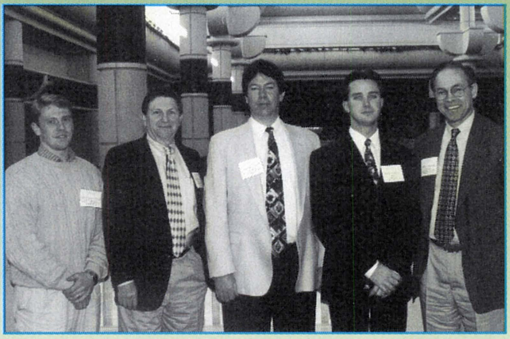
Steve Hix of the International Recreational Go-Kart Association has been named executive director of MGAUS. Founding members elected as an interim executive committee and officers include Arne Lundmark of Adventure Golf Services, Rich Lahey of Harris Miniature Golf, Burdette Bremer of Castle Golf, Chris Foster of Cost of Wisconsin, and Mark Nicholls of Sportexe. Other founding committee members are Don Nelson of SGD, Terry Sopko of Wittek, Steve Lancia of Foam Technologies, and Dan Isom of American Miniature Golf.



Don Nelson

Lundmark commented: "The association will assist operators through newsletters, seminars, and other actions so they are better able to service their guests' needs and hopefully increase their sales and profitability."

For more about MGAUS, call (210)824-1923; fax (210)824-5186.



From left: Chris Foster, Burdette Bremer, Rich Lahey, Mark Nicholls, and Arne Lundmark.

EGMGA targets tournaments

Also announced in the May issue of Play Meter, the International Association of Family Entertainment Centers is supporting the new Emerald Green Miniature Golf Association that will provide services to miniature golf operators for organizing tournament play. Memberships are open to both the courses and professional miniature golfers.

EGMGA was organized by Terry Damron, Jesse Williams, and Jeff Hadler, who saw a need for more tournaments. They plan an annual national competition scheduled for October at the Mall of America course in Bloomington, Minn., where Williams manages Golf Mountain.

A variety of tournament packages are available. For more about EGMGA, call (888)928-4857; fax (502)362-9979.

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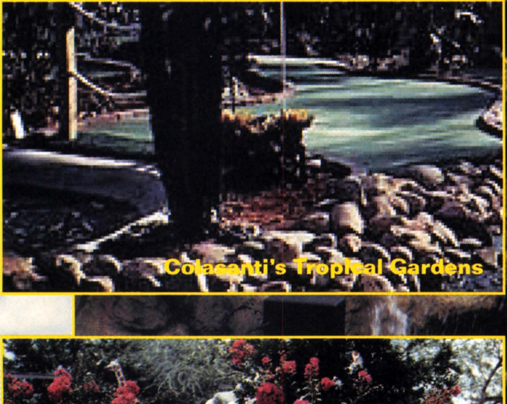
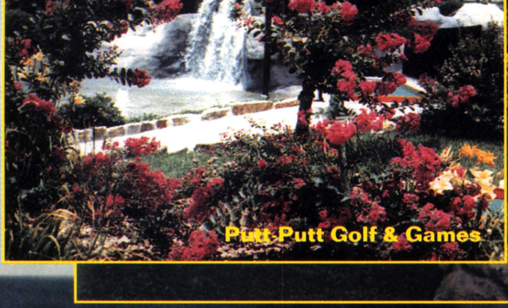


Colasanti's Tropical Gardens



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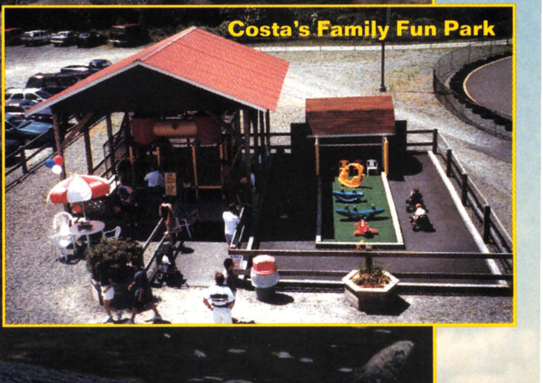
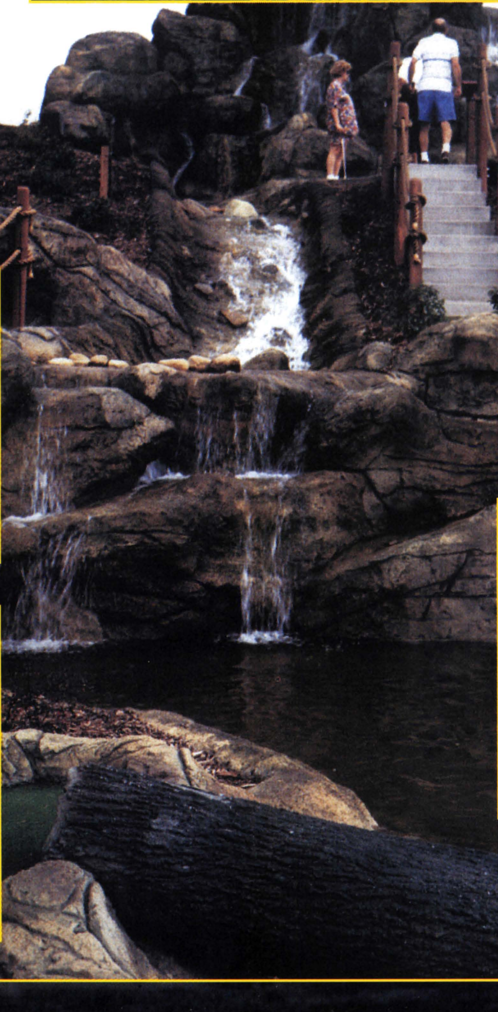
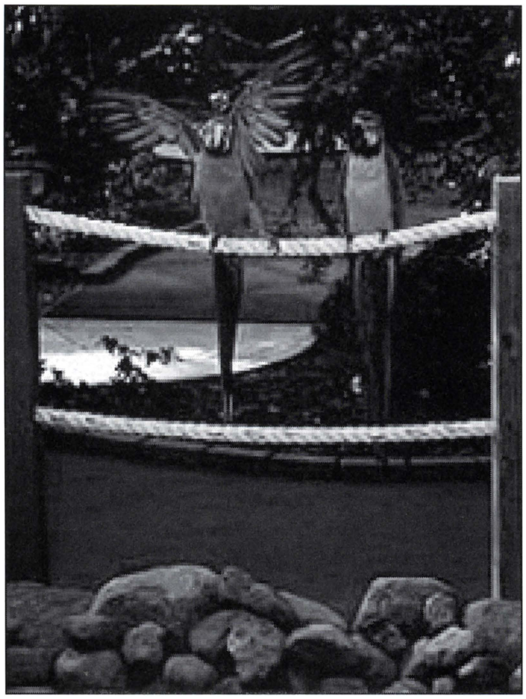


Costa's Family Fun Park



Prairieville Park

Colasanti's Tropical Gardens Ruthven, Ontario, Canada



Reggae music and tropical plants from all over the world create an island paradise Caribbean-themed 18-hole miniature golf course at this family attraction open 364 days a year.

Colasanti's has been around since the '40s, growing from a tropical greenhouse on 29 acres to a major family destination featuring a petting zoo, kid's jungle gym and playground, large craft area, game room, and acres of plants. The snack bar has evolved into a 500-seat restaurant. Weddings, company picnics, festivals, and charity fund-raisers are routinely held here.

According to Tony Norman of Colasanti's, "Miniature golf was ideal for us because a lot of families come here and they all play. We had expected 43,000 players the first year and ended with 56,000! In the first three weeks of July we saw a 68 percent increase over the play in July last year." Overall, Colasanti's averages 600,000 customers a year.

"Don't expect to just turn the key and make it work. You must have hands-on management and good people around you."

Putt-Putt Golf & Games Webster, Texas

For 18 years this location has thrived outside of Houston near the Johnson Space Center, honored in 1995 with Putt-Putt's Alvin Taylor Award for the most beautiful and well maintained franchise in the system. It also hosted the national championship of the Professional Putters Association of Putt-Putt Golf Courses of America.

Tournaments are big at this facility that boasts 54 holes of miniature golf, laser tag, go-karts, bumper boats, nine batting cages, pro baseball training center, game room with videos and redemption, kiddie area, and six themed party rooms.

Jim Saxe says the facility has always stayed on top of trends: "It used to be you just put in a new attraction to keep customers coming. But when you're in business for a while you have to put a lot of effort into promotions. You can't just build it; you have to be able to promote it." NASCAR posters, Houston Rockets tickets, and laser tag T-shirts are among the rewards for high scores and competitions.

Saxe also replaces landscaping four times a year to maintain the feeling of "a walk in the park." He's seen a lot of corporate-type FECs. His best advice: "You have to have a personal interest in the location. You can't do it from a secondary site. Someone has to be there, hands-on."

Tower Lanes Tacoma, Wash.

Lou Dales added miniature golf to his 35,000-square-foot bowling center just shy of two years ago. A game room, pool tables, and restaurant round out the facility.

Says Dales: "I had thought about doing this many years ago and 1995 seemed like the right time." The main reason? "It was due to the decline in the organized play of the bowling business that I started looking for another activity that my customers could enjoy," he explains. "We knew the children would play; it was the adults we wanted to challenge."

The 18-hole indoor course occupies 12,000 square feet of space and features challenging holes. It has streams, fountains, and waterfalls—amenities you don't expect to see indoors. Adds Dales: "But we don't have windmills."

The Hollywood Connection Columbus, Ga.

In late May this megaplex of entertainment opened with what may be the largest indoor miniature golf course in the country.

Total facility space is 127,000 square feet featuring Caddyshack, 18 holes of miniature golf, spread out over 17,000 square feet; a 10-screen cinema (four with stadium seating); 11,000-square-foot game room; Xanadu Skate Center with extravagant light and sound system; '50s-themed diner with full menu; 28-foot Chance Americana Carrousel; five themed party rooms (doll house, dinosaur, sports, and two with polar bears); bumper cars, and laser tag.

Of special interest to the younger set are the child's swing ride, Ferris wheel, kiddie train, and multilevel soft modular play structure.

Construction manager George Wilcox says, "We had high expectations for miniature golf and it has exceeded our goals and done very well." He describes the course as "challenging for a golfer but it incorporates fun elements to make it enjoyable for young folks." There are several animated features, waterfalls, and scenic streams. The theme is based on Hollywood sets: Western, beach-sea, Jurassic, and metropolis.

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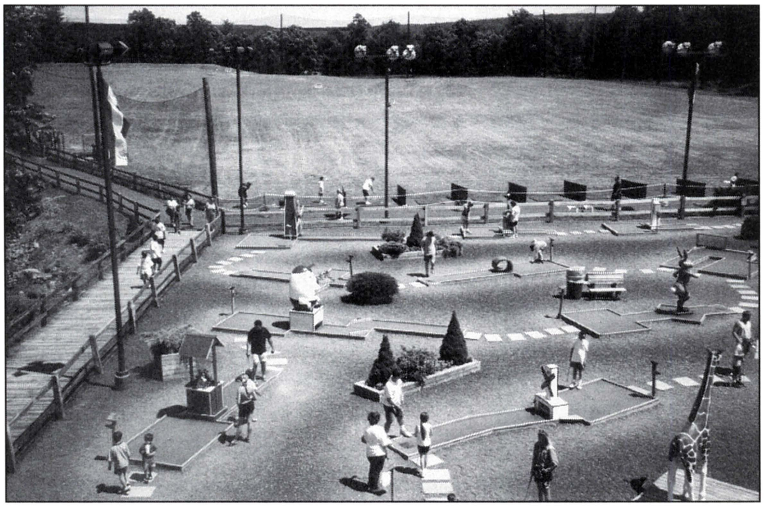
Costa's Family Fun Park
Hawley, Pa.

If you are driving Route 6 near Lake Wallenpaupack in The Poconos you can't miss the 15-acre Costa's Family Fun Park, a family owned and operated park that has provided enjoyment for seven years.

Among the attractions are the 18-hole miniature golf course (modular-style); full-service restaurant; golf driving range with astro-turf tee surfaces; go-karts for single or double occupants; game room; 10-station batting cages; and a kiddie land that consists of a soft modular playground, ball pit, pedal go-karts, and kiddie rides.



Ken Lauersen of Costa's says the golf course caters to all players and is economically priced so a family of five can come often and have a good time. Lauersen adds: "Miniature golf is a mainstay of any family fun park—it's always a big draw. We get a lot of stop-by business from folks that didn't intend to play but saw the course from the highway."

In the game room, tickets earned on children's games are redeemable for ice cream. Families are a top priority at Costa's, where child-size bats and putters mean the youngest players can enjoy every activity.

> "You can't just build it; you have to be able to promote it."

Prairieville Park
Waukesha, Wis.

Rocks, mountains, and waterfalls highlight the 18-hole adventure-style miniature golf course at this park that opened in 1995. Prairieville's Bill Gustafson says, "The course is one of the most challenging ones in the country. I get some pro golfers who struggle with it because of the challenging greens."

The park, which also offers five batting cage stations situated on a terraced hill, follows an early settlers theme with wagons and Old West buildings throughout the two-acre site. Prairieville was the original name of the city.

The course has been very successful. Gustafson explained: "In the Milwaukee metro area there were only a few older courses but not any of the new style. There was a demand. People go to vacation areas for this type of miniature golf; now they can find it close to home."

In addition to local visitors, Prairieville draws a lot of tourists driving on nearby I-94 who see it and decide to stop. The park is open from April through October and also sports a gift shop that specializes in Green Bay Packer merchandise through the football season.

TOMBSTONE
GENERALSTORE

Fantasyland Seekonk, Mass.

The 36 holes of miniature golf built here in 1990 follow a New England theme complete with lighthouse, sawmill, castle, and an abundance of flowers and waterfalls from one end to the other. Fantasyland's Ralph Zanfagna terms it "more of a happening." The course is beyond unique, designed like an amphitheater, and fully handicap accessible.

"We took a page out of the Disney book," adds Zanfagna. "We have a 150-foot walkway where you can watch the golfers while you are waiting to start. There's room for people who just enjoy watching, and they are encouraged to play. There are three good spots on the grounds where you can view the course."

Other attractions are the 16-station Hoops! USA, kiddie bumper boats, a 28-foot Chance Americana Carrousel, Majestic Bumper Cars, Sartori airport ride, robotic stage show, a game room with over 75 titles, and a full kitchen that serves homemade pizza. Fantasyland can handle parties for up to 300 people. Indoor attractions are housed in a 35,000-square-foot building. The entire facility occupies six-and-a-half acres. Before embarking on this new venture the owners had been in the recreation business for a long time, operating an indoor tennis club and bowling center. They bought the Fantasyland site as a roller skating rink in 1979 and then decided to turn it into a family entertainment center.

Zanfagna is understandably proud of his facility: "We chose miniature golf as the first attraction because I really thought that New England was ready for it. It was a great vehicle to get into family entertainment. You can spend more time with your family on a miniature golf course than anywhere else."

"Miniature golf is a mainstay of any family fun park–it's always a big draw."

Everyone in the Seekonk community knows Fantasyland. Many of its young people have worked there during high school or college. The Fantasyland Kid's Club, which lists over 15,000 children, offers weekly specials for club members at the fun center and in conjunction with local merchants. And there are cross-promotions between miniature golf and the indoor attractions. In addition, the club provides a tremendous customer base and birthday party mailing list.

"We do a lot of things to keep customers happy," says Zanfagna, "such as hosting Friendship Day and Ladies Day with special pricing. This is a nice place to bring someone on a date to have some fun. Miniature golf is a good thing for teenagers."

Landscaping at Fantasyland gets close attention three days a week plus employees work with the flowers. It's a big part of the overall impression. "When a place presents itself in a good manner the customers act that way too," concludes Zanfagna.

He offers some sage advice: "Don't expect to just turn the key and make it work. You must have hands-on management and good people around you. Absentee ownership doesn't work. Hands-on managers never get second-hand information, and that's very important in the people business." ▲

CAROLE **SJOLANDER**

Everyone wishes FOR A CRYSTAL BALL

SKY BOUND
ARCADE

Prizes
Prizes
Prizes

FROM TOP:
The Sky Bound Arcade in Las Vegas beckons visitors into a wonderland of fun.

The wall murals in the Sky Bound Arcade are stunning and add an element of fun to game playing.

Offering your customers something extra is what redemption is all about. Be creative with your counter.

This creative "kiddie korner" is designed with the little ones in mind.

Everyone wishes for a crystal ball. Especially when thing get tight and we wonder whether it's just a cycle or a death spiral. Maybe the problem is thinking of changes in our industry in in those terms. When a pendulum swings, it swings back and forth forever to the same two places. While sales may cycle, ebb, and flow it is generally the result of changes in the industry or the environment. History is not quite as precise as the pendulum in repeating itself.

There's the old admonition that states, "Know what business you are in."

Here's a story illustrating what that means. There was a factory that prided itself on being in the drill making business, and that's how they described what they did—made drills. One day they rethought their business and its goals and realized they weren't simply making drills, they were in the hole making business. After that they came out with a whole new line of products that produced holes using lasers.

Like those in the hole business, we must remember that we are not in the video business or even the redemption business, we are in the fun business. Only a very few products will be classics, those that the public will never tire of. *Skee-Ball* comes to mind, but even *Skee-Ball* has changed. Most products will enjoy their ascendancy and their decline, then quietly pass away. But the company that is creative, flexible, well managed, and has adapted its objectives to providing fun will do more than survive, it will thrive.

I think back to a time in our not so distant past. First there were game arcades. Then after the advent of *Pong* there were more sophisticated video games and locations couldn't get enough of them. Video games were showing up in bars, restaurants, convenience stores, and a myriad of other locations where people gathered.

Now everyone is getting into the act. Bowling centers, skating rinks, movie complexes, themed restaurants, and even more I've overlooked here are adding games to attract customers. And the list of games providing fun for customers in all of these locations is getting longer. I know that the most creative manufacturers have identified many new markets for their products and with the way

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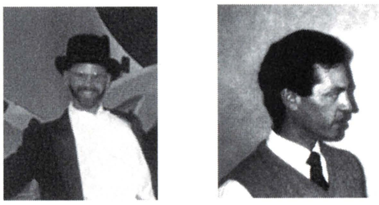

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the marketplace is changing, it's critical that they explore all options.

In addition to exploring new markets, creativity in product development is a key that allows some businesses to succeed year after year. I recently had a call from a member wanting information on the depreciation method authorized by the IRS for games. Recognizing that games will generally make most of their revenues during their first year, this method (income forecasting) allows game owners to depreciate based on their estimates of the revenues the game will generate, thereby freeing up money that can be used for purchasing more games that would have been spent on taxes.

If game owners aren't already using this method for hanging onto some of their game revenues, it's worth the time to investigate. I found out about it in a back issue of Play Meter to which I was referred by Dave Schwartz, chairman of IAFEC's operational management council.

But getting back to product development. There are three distinct components: creativity; marketing; and sound financial management. The ability to be constantly creative and come up with new ideas will translate into exciting products that will entice fun center patrons and excite the fun center owner by enhancing game net profits. Marketing must be in place because even the best product in the world can't succeed if people don't know about it. And sound financial management means budgeting for research and development in good times and bad, maintaining the financial condition that will allow new product development and effective marketing.

Family entertainmnet centers aren't just for games anymore. Bumper cars are just one of a number of added attractions available.

IAFEC has been watching the Children's Entertainment Centers (CECs) which fell on hard times in the wake of the Discovery Zone bankruptcy and subsequent downsizing. This was a double-edged sword. Discovery Zone, Leaps and Bounds, and the other CEC chains that developed so quickly and waned almost as fast, created a whole new awareness of children's entertainment. At the same time, it contributed to a negative business environment.

The turbulence in this industry saw some manufacturers who couldn't survive. Each is an individual case, and I wouldn't presume to analyze what went wrong with individual CECs that didn't make it or those manufactures of CEC products that didn't survive. But many of those that did make it through this turbulent time are feeling a resurgence of hope. As one of the veterans told me just a few days ago, "New centers are opening. We are selling product." And they are also developing new products. They're ready and active because through it all, one basic fact remains: children, parents, and families are still looking for ways to have fun.

This leads us to another area where some of us need to expand our thinking. It's how we define family. Are the adults dining and playing at the new Dave & Buster's facility any less a family than the dad and son at the batting cages or the five- and six-year-olds having a birthday party at a Chuck E. Cheese restaurant?

We've become so set in our thinking, especially with games where we regard males aged 16 to 22 as the prime audience. If it's true that they are—and I'm not sure of that—does it mean other age groups are not interested, or is it that we need to find ways to attract them? As an industry we need to get creative. How about devising ways to teach game playing as the technology gets increasingly more complicated. One thing I'm sure of: is that people of all ages don't outgrow their need for fun and entertainment.

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Promotion is the name of the game. What child wouldn't love to follow this little guy?

We need to challenge our thinking and perhaps our preconceived ideas in every way. By breaking out of the mold, by exploring new possibilities and opportunities, we can endure and triumph in this or any business. There are always opportunities. It's our job to find them and cash in on them. Because our industry is blessed with many creative and energetic people, I see good times ahead. ▲

Carole Sjolander is the executive director of the International Association of Family Entertainment Centers. The IAFEC is dedicated to the successful operation and management of family entertainment and recreation centers and is an official Fun Expo sponsor. For more information on the association, call (914)993-9297.

FUN FAX

IAFEC members answer questions each month

The International Association of Family Entertainment Centers each month faxes its members the IAFEC Fun Fax, described as an innovative, up-to-the-minute, networking tool created and used solely by the members of IAFEC. In the fax, readers are asked several questions and the answers follow in a subsequent issue. Here's a sample of the questions and the answers printed with permission of IAFEC.

1. What are your fastest moving redemption prizes or retail items?

According to respondents, the fastest moving redemption items are candy and all types of slum merchandise. Specific hot items include: rings, bouncing balls, bracelets, plush, water guns or soft dart guns, magic ink, key chains, friendship rings, whoopie cushions, sports plaques, glow in the dark items, and rainbow springs.

2. What is the best type of indoor amusement ride to add to your FEC?

The best type of indoor ride to add to your FEC is one that the whole family can enjoy. Make sure the kids love it! The ride should be safe, low maintenance and easy to operate. You also want a low initial investment with a quick return, but the ride also needs longevity. Suggestions include: small electric kiddie car tracks, Mini-Himalaya, Orbotron, motion simulators, carousel, bumper cars, and trains.

3. Do you have employees hired specifically to clean or are the employees assigned to a specific area which they are responsible for cleaning?

For most facilities, cleaning is a constant, ongoing process. All employees are responsible for their areas throughout their shift and major cleaning such as vacuuming is done before close each night. Most facilities either hire or have specific staff for big cleaning jobs such as bathrooms, locker rooms, kitchens, etc.

4. How do you handle the coat problem?

There are two schools of thought on the coat issue: one is to simply provide coat racks and have a sign that states "not responsible for lost articles;" or have a fully staffed coat check service. Most who have the coat racks say they have not had problems with loss and customers seem to use the racks or coat areas. Those with fully staffed coat check service charged a minimal fee, about 50 cents per coat. One respondent stated that the coat check promotes table turns on busy days since people are not leaving their items on tables and chairs. It is cautioned that expensive furs and leathers, cameras, purses, or video cameras should not be accepted due to liability concerns. Be sure to check out the local innkeeper laws for information on your assumed liability.

One facility offers parties plastic bags at the conclusion of the party to store gifts or jackets so they do not end up stored on tables or chairs. The coat check is not a huge profit center, but a guest courtesy to make the guests stay more trouble free and convenient.

5. Do you run your own food or leave it to a national, regional, or local vendor?

FECs run the gamit on food service from running their own concession to outsourcing entirely. Those who run their own food service feel they benefit the most because the profit is all theirs, while those who use outside sources like the convenience. If you decide to outsource, make sure the food vendor is willing to discount for groups and parties. This is vital to the success of your party business.

6. What is the best package deal for birthday parties?

The ideal birthday party package introduces the guests to all aspects of your FEC. Be sure to include supervision so parents have a positive experience as well. Don't forget value, the customers should perceive they are getting twice as much as they are paying for. Make sure you have the best deal in town. Create a basic package with a minimal profit margin and then offer add-ons. These are the real money-makers. Be sure to have GREAT customer service.

7. How do owners handle injuries? Do you pay medical bills in cases where there is no fault on the facility's part?

From facility owner/operators: many operators will admit no responsibility and wait for the patron to take further action and then turn the claim over to the insurance company. Often a gift, such as a free membership, will appease a customer who is more put out than really injured. If you can work out a deal like this, get the customer to sign a release without admitting that you did anything wrong or were negligent. Due to high deductibles, some owners will pay small bills as long as the client signs a release. Full written reports should be filed by both staff and guest witnesses for all incidents. Overall, the insurance company is best qualified to determine when to pay or not. This is what you pay them for.

From the insurance companies: One of the most misunderstood coverages is medical bills or payments. This is the same as "no fault." This coverage is supposed to deter lawsuits by paying the small medical bills and keeping the claimant satisfied without seeking an attorney, regardless of who is at fault. We do not recommend telling patrons that you carry such insurance coverage, however, a simple statement "send us any medical bills that are not covered by your insurance and we will submit them to our insurance carrier" should suffice. Definitely speak with your insurance broker or company to make sure there is a clear understanding of how the claims process works and how the medical payments should be handled. A genuine interest should be shown in the customer's well-being without interference which could lead to "good Samaritan" negligence on your part. These procedures should be part of your employee handbook and training procedures.

8. If you own your games, what percentage of revenue do you spend on NEW game purchases annually?

Answers of how much members are spending on NEW games purchases range from one percent to 20 percent. The general rule is that a facility should spend approximately 30 percent of game revenues on NEW games. ▲

THE KID'S GUIDE TO

Las Vegas

You're in Las Vegas for the Fun Expo. You've heard that Las Vegas is shifting its focus from die-hard gambling to family entertainment, so you've brought the kids. As dedicated business people we understand you're spending all your time at the convention and the kids want to know what to do. We enlisted the talents of Margie Treger, who lives in Las Vegas and is under 21, to guide the younger folks on a tour of what exciting wonders await them.

MARGIE TREGER

"OK, kids, be good. Mom and dad are just going to dinner and to gamble. We'll be back soon." Is this something you hear from your parents all too often when you are in Las Vegas? Don't you just hate to watch your parents gamble? Don't you hate it even more when you can't watch them because a stupid security guards says, "You can't stand here, you're not 21." Then you have to watch from a distance. If you can relate to this, keep reading. This article will supply you with tips for the under-21 scene in Las Vegas. Since I have experienced these dilemmas myself, I know how frustrating this can be. There are plenty of things for those of you under 21 to do in Vegas.

GAME ROOMS

There are so many different places to play video games in Las Vegas it's unbelievable! The newest and probably the biggest is located just next to the All Star Cafe. Its name is becoming popular among children of all ages. This place, Sega GameWorks, has everything from a 75-foot high rock climb wall and a pub to the latest in video game technology.

While in GameWorks, I watched my friend, Davina, climb to the top of that rock wall. I asked her what it was like and the only comment she made after trying it was , "Man that was cool!" After a quick rest, Mike (our seven-year-old friend), Davina, and I all had tons of fun mastering all the newest technology. It's amazing how much more a seven-year-old knew than the two 18-year-olds he was with! To the parents: don't forget that if you don't want to deal with the noise, there is a pub in which you can enjoy a relaxing spirit!

But GameWorks is not the only game room Sega has in Las Vegas. Sega also stands proudly behind its Sega Virtualand at the Luxor Hotel and Casino. Virtualand is a fun-filled game room that includes an F-14 flight simulator that rotates 360 degrees and an Indy 500 sim-

Here's Margie with Mike Cerullo at Sunset Station Casino.

ulated car race. This game room occupies two separate levels, providing an easier separation of redemption and non-redemption games.

If you've visited the Sega game rooms and are ready to see more, there are the midways at New York, New York; Treasure Island; Circus Circus; and Excalibur. These hotels not only include video and redemption games, but also those challenging midway games where we all like to try to win a big stuffed animal. The unique theme of each of the hotels is brought out in the games. Coney Island Emporium in the New York, New York has tons of fun-filled games that prove to be quite fun. You can challenge your friends in the bumper cars, or should I say bumper taxies! Then move on to a game of laser tag. It's quite an experience.

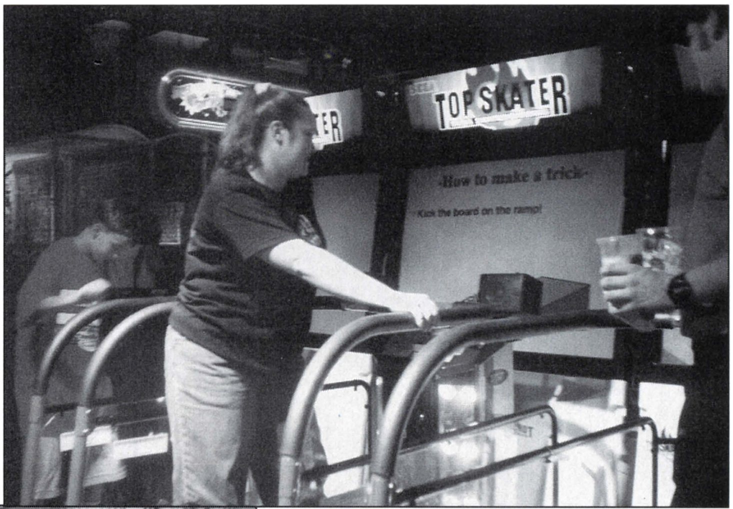
If you don't want to hang out in the "Big Apple" then you might try the circus acts at Circus Circus. They perform in the center of the midway daily. But alas matey, if the circus is not the way to go, then try the Pirate's Cove at Treasure Island. The minute you pass through the entrance, you'll feel like you are in a pirate's domain complete with everything you'd expect to see there. It's sure to fill your ship with treasures galore! For a taste of fun even older than pirates, visit the medieval midway at Excalibur. Even the folks might have fun, if you want to bring them with you.

RIDES

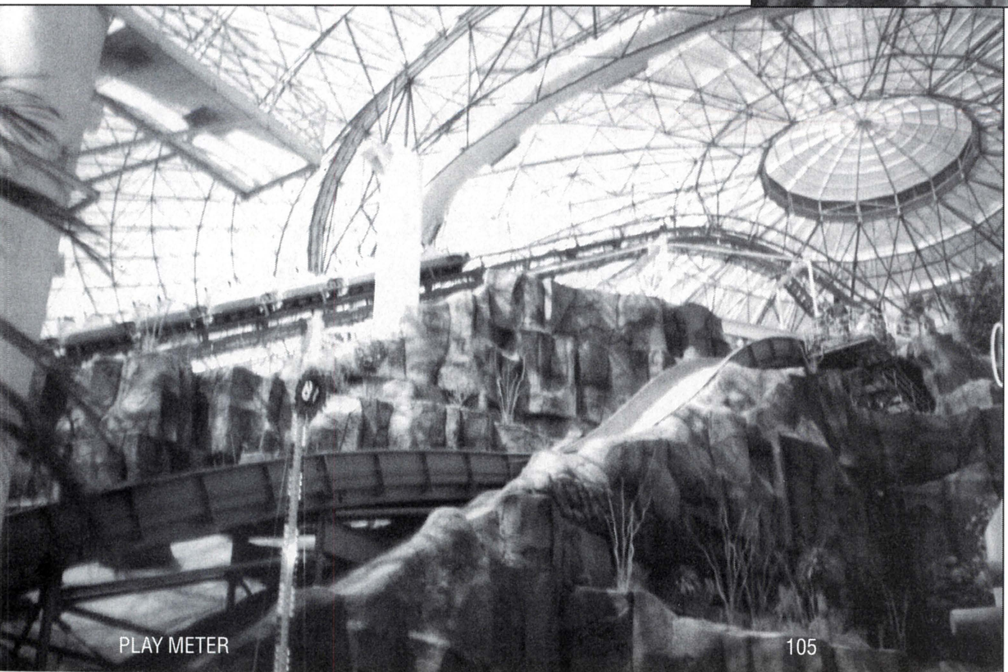
I know it sounds really hard to believe: rides in Vegas? Even more incredible: rides on the Strip? Yes to both! Circus Circus; New York, New York; MGM Grand; and the Stratosphere all have rides that you won't want to miss. Let's start at the beginning: Circus Circus, in addition to its gigantic midway, also has the Grand Slam Canyon, it's own version of a theme park. It includes an exciting roller coaster complete with loops and all. The log flume, however short, is refreshing since you get completely soaked. The array of rides and games are hours of entertainment for all ages. I took Mike Cerullo, my seven-year-old friend, and he had an absolute blast running from ride to ride and game to game.

Next is New York, New York's Coney Island Emporium with its roller coaster that will have you twisting and screaming through the New York skyline. It's a seriously intense coaster. If seriously intense is what you're looking for, look no further than the Sky Screamer at the MGM Grand. Now that's intense! The Sky Screamer is basically a gigantic swing. They strap up to three people to a couple of ropes, pull them up about 125 feet in the air, and let go. You feel weightless while you fall, only to be pulled up into a pendulum like motion.

After you experience the Sky Screamer and understand completely why it's called that, you can visit MGM's own theme park. It's complete with wandering street acts, roller coaster, and much more. Speaking of roller coasters, the other one in Vegas is at the top of the Stratosphere. Although it doesn't have loops, I'm still too chicken to try it. However, I did have the nerve to try Stratosphere's other ride, the Big Shot. This is a reverse free fall. It shoots you up at four Gs, and intense is just not a big enough word to describe it. It's an incredible rush. You'll probably feel like I did—on top of the world!


TOP SKATER
-How to make a trick-
Kick the board on the ramp!

Margie's friend Nicole took on the challenge of Sega's Top Skater at GameWorks.



This is the Log Flume ride at Grand Slam Canyon in Circus Circus.

After being flipped, flown, and shot up you are bound to feel either nauseous or ready to get wet. Ready to get wet would my guess so here's where you go: Wet N'Wild. It's located right on the Strip next to the Sahara. It's a fun place to cool down after a day of rides or sightseeing.

MOVIES

If you're a movie buff, or have a couple of hours to kill, a movie theater has just opened up on the Strip. It has eight theaters, which are in addition to two of the largest THX auditoriums in Las Vegas. At night the movies are $6.75 for adults, but there is a $5 student discount and children four to 11 are only $4. If you want to visit during the day, all shows are $4. This is a great way to spend a couple of hours if you don't want to be bothered with going to the convention with your parents. The theater is right next to the MGM Grand.

ADVENTURE

For those with a sense of adventure, there are things for you. Rental cars are a fun thing for parents to get so they can take you to explore the city. There are plenty of places to have fun off the Strip. Let's start with the Las Vegas Mini Grand Prix. This mini car race is tons of fun. The cars are designed for all ages. Mountasia, just south of the Strip, is another place with mini cars. It also has miniature golf, a roller rink, and lots of video games. Oh, I almost forgot, they have food too.

If your parents insist on gambling in a local casino, convince them to go to a Station casino. Why? These casinos have KidsQuest (a baby-sitting service), a movie theater, tons of places to eat, and most have really cool arcades. You'll have plenty to keep you busy while your parents win (or lose) in the casino. KidsQuest is an awesome way for children to have fun with only a small fee for the parents. Most of the children I talked to didn't want to leave after being there for an hour. The theaters are huge and have the latest releases. Dining is a treat. You never know what you'll find.

EATS

There are many places to eat right on and off the Strip. Of course, there are the usual things kids desire like McDonald's, Taco Bell, Burger King, and Wendy's. Then there are the food courts in many of the hotels so you won't have to go too far.

If fast food is not what you're craving, there are the favorite "loud" places to eat. Las Vegas has all of the famous star-owned restaurants namely Hard Rock Cafe, Planet Hollywood, Harley-Davidson Cafe, and of course, Andre Agassi-owned All Star Cafe. Each has a gift shop so bring plenty of money. These are fun places to eat not only because of the loud music and memorabilia, but also because of the prestige they hold with your friends. Warning: these places charge a minimum of $5 for a plain hamburger!

LAWS

Like most cities and towns, Las Ve-

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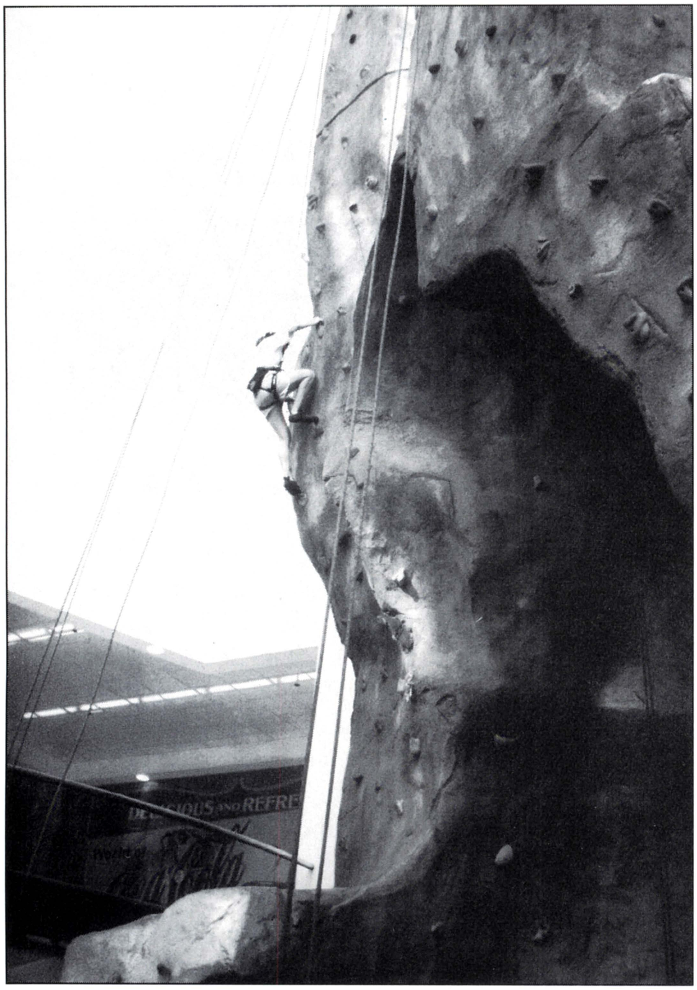


Top left:
If you're up to it like Margie's friend Davina, Sega GameWorks offers a realistic rock climb wall.

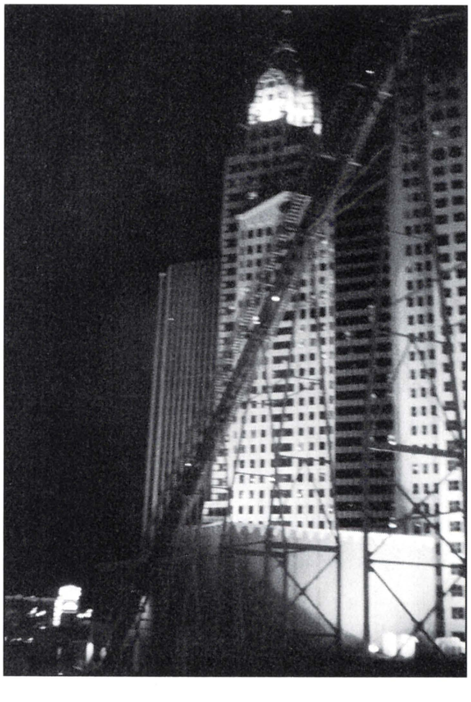
Bottom right:
Could the roller coaster at New York, New York really be as scary as it looks?

gas has curfews, especially on the Strip. Those under the age of 18 have to be off the Strip after 10:00 p.m. unless they are with a parent or guardian who is 18 or older. But wait, if you think you can simply go to one of the arcades, you can't. There's a new state law that proclaims anybody under the age of 18 cannot be in an arcade after 11:00 p.m. without a parent or guardian.

Be careful and remember that these laws aren't there to make you bored; they are there for your own protection and well-being. And they are enforced. Note to parents: keep in mind that if you do decide to let the kids go alone before the curfew, don't expect the attendants to watch or be responsible for your children.

I hope this article helps you find things you'll love doing in Las Vegas once you've gotten tired of Fun Expo. Keep the laws in mind while you're having the time of your life.

Needless to say, these aren't the only things to do, but they will get you started on your way as you explore this fascinating city. I'd like to say thanks to all my friends, Davina, Mike, Marcella, Nicole, and Neil, who let me drag them all over Las Vegas finding these inside tips! ▲



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FEC EVENT runs concurrent with new LBE conference

FUN EXPO EXHIBIT HOURS

Wed., Sept. 24 12:15 p.m.-6 p.m. • Thu., Sept. 25 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
Fri. Sept. 26 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Serious family entertainment center and location-based entertainment owners and operators, developers and investors can have a field day in Las Vegas this month at two major happenings: the Fun Expo Sept. 23-26 at the Sands Expo Center and the first-time conference "Location-Based Entertainment: Critical Success Strategies" Sept. 23-24 at the Mirage Convention Center.

First, an update on Fun Expo. As the show moves into its seventh year, the agenda continues to focus on its strong suit–educational sessions. Over 40 different seminars are scheduled to cover every aspect of FEC operations, from go-karting to laser tag and from customer service to food service.

Says show manager Bailey Beeken, "We've tried to create an annual buying show where owners and operators can find everything they need in one place. Whether you're in real estate, shopping centers, hotels and resorts, family restaurants, skating rinks, bowling centers, driving ranges, batting cages, parks, or any other family recreation business, we're your one-stop shopping source."

In addition to the detailed information on attractions and day-to-day business, the show also is the occasion for new product unveilings, including the Climb N Dangle rock-climbing experience (Rebound Action Sports), the Voyager F5000 flight simulator (Thrillseekers Australia), urethane putters and hot color two-piece golf balls (Eastern Golf Corp.), an electronic bulk vending machine that accepts $1 bills (A & A Co./Parkway Machine Corp.), the Redemption Express Module system (Fun Center Software), a large capacity coin dispenser that holds up to 14,000 quarters or tokens (Hamilton Mfg. Co.), and the Super Route Manager '97 software (Premier Data Corp.).

According to Beeken, attendees will "find the answers to their problems, discover new traffic builders, and learn how to increase revenues, all at the same time."

Meanwhile, right before the trade show, Fun Expo is sponsoring a special one-and-a-half day LBE conference targeted to real estate developers, designers and builders, technology developers, investors, marketing managers, and amusement operators.

Among the notable speakers are Michael Getlan of Amusement Consultants Ltd., Roberta Perry of IWERKS, and Dave Corriveau of Dave & Buster's. Pat Esgate of Esgate & Associates is the program moderator. At the end of the conference attendees will visit the Fun Expo for a closer look at the latest technology in themed entertainment.

Following are the event schedules:

LBE CONFERENCE

Tue., Sept. 23

7:45 a.m.-8:30 a.m. –Continental Breakfast

8:30 a.m.-9:15 a.m.–"Shattering the Box: Entertainment as the Driving Force of the Decade"

9:15 a.m.-10:45 a.m.–"Content Meets Conduit: The New Role of Entertainment Providers in Development Strategies"

10:45 a.m.-12:15 p.m.–"LBE Business Models: Creating Alliances for Success"

12:15 p.m.-2 p.m.–Lunch and preview of "Star Trek: The Experience," a venture developed by Paramount Parks and Hilton Hotels

2 p.m.-3:30 p.m.–"Through the Looking Glass: Previewing New Concepts in Entertainment"

3:10 p.m.-3:45 p.m.–Break

3:45 p.m.-5:15 p.m.–"Branding: Leveraging Entertainment Assets in a Site-Specific Environment"

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Wed., Sept. 24

8:30 a.m.-9:15 p.m.–"Case Study: Inverting the Pyramid of Entertainment Brand Development"

9:15 a.m.-10:45 a.m.–Breakout sessions (3)–"Will This Work Here, and Why?;" "Corporate Sponsorships and International Opportunities;" "Creating a Sound Operations Strategy."

10:45 a.m.-11 a.m.–Break

11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.–"Sticks and Bricks: Retail Entertainment from Concept to Rollout"

FUN EXPO

SEMINARS AND ACTIVITIES

TUE., SEPT. 23

8: 30 a.m.-Noon–"Developer's Forum: FEC Development for Long-Term Success(*)"

Noon-1:30 p.m.–Box Lunch Breakouts on indoor FECs, outdoor FECs, children's entertainment centers, and high-tech entertainment centers

Noon-1:30 p.m.–Box Lunch Round Table for facilities under 10,000 square feet(*)

1:30 p.m.-3 p.m.–"The Under 10,000-Square-Foot Location;" "Get More Bang for Your Advertising Buck(*);" "Finance and Budget Tips for Veterans(*)"

2 p.m.-4:30 p.m.–"Concession Go-Karting 101;" "Starting an Amusement Rental Business"

3:30 p.m.-5 p.m.–"Soft Modular Play Units;" "Sports-Themed FECs;" "Keeping Fun in the Family: Making Your Family Business Work(*);" "Employee Motivation(*)"

WED. SEPT. 24

8 a.m.-10:30 a.m.–"Step Out of the Box"(*)

8:30 a.m.-10 a.m.–"Coin-Opdate;" "Merchandising Madness: Retail That Pays(*)"

8:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m.–"Concession Go-Karting Veteran Round Table(*);" "How to Handle an Accident(*)"

8:30 a.m.-Noon–"Amusement Rental Business Forum(*)"

11 a.m.-12:15 p.m.–IAFEC Golden Token Achievement Awards and Keynote Address (all invited)

1:30 p.m.–"Facility Design & Layout;" "Competitive Game Play: Leagues, Tournaments, and Beyond(*);" "Time Management for General Managers: Work Smarter, Not Harder(*)"

3:30 p.m.-5 p.m.–"Laser Tag: Do it Right the First Time;" "Customer Service(*)"

6:30 p.m.–Entertainment at the Motown Cafe plus a visit to the exciting Coney Island Emporium, both at the New York-New York Hotel & Casino ($60 per adult, $25 per child)

THU., SEPT. 25

8 a.m.-10 a.m.–"Getting Personnel and Keeping Them(*);" "Sponsorships: Bargaining Chips to Dip Into(*)"

8:30 a.m.-10 a.m.–"Fairs, Festivals, and Public Events: Concession Opportunities;" "Location-Based Entertainment: The Basics;" "Add Spice to Your Food Service(*)"

8:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m.–"Miniature Golf Veteran Round Table(*)"

10:30 a.m.-Noon–"High-Tech Equipment;" "Give Your Business that Show Business Flair(*);" "Group Sales Training(*)"

Noon-1:30 p.m.–Skating Center Forum(*), Luncheon and Bowling Center Forum and Luncheon(*)

1:30 p.m.-3 p.m.–"Redemption for Rookies;" "Making Your Operation Insurable(*);" "Birthday Parties: Icing on the Cake(*)"

3:30 p.m.-5 p.m.–"The Straight Answer to Any Question;" "Big Rides in Small Places"

FRI., SEPT. 26

8:30 a.m-10:30 a.m.–"The X Chromosome: Marketing to Your Female Customers;" "Food Service for the Non-Chef"

8:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m.–"Miniature Golf 101"

10:30 a.m.-Noon–"The Square Root of Marketing: Develop and Implement a Winning Plan"

Note: The Fun Pass includes 20 of the above sessions except those indicated with an asterisk (*).

And don't forget the Silent Auction where you can bid on games, equipment, and a host of other prizes. Proceeds are designated for industry and consumer research projects that translate to better information for solid business decisions in the future.

FUN EXPO

FUN EXPO

Exhibitor List

A & A Co./ Parkway Machine Corp.	5024	(410)252-1020
A & E Quality Products	1113	(913)371-1040
A.G.E.	4048	(954)527-0907
A.M .& D.	1015	(707)459-9451
AAMA	5057	(847)290-9088
ABC/KidzKart	3019	(503)390-5714
Action Lighting	1056	(406)586-5105
Actual Reality International/ARI	7089	(403)440-3706
Adventure Golf Services	4070	(616)922-8166
Air Dimensional Design (ADD)	7052	(310)838-8823
Airspace USA	2030	(704)258-1319
Alexander Entertainment/ Totally Fun Co.	7113	(813)446-8811
Allied Specialty Insurance	4051	(813)367-6900
Alter Enterprises	4084	(201)616-1111
American Changer Corp.	5068	(954)772-5363
American Lighting	5109	(303)363-6945
American Locker Security Systems	6110	(716)664-9600
American Miniature Golf & Go Kart Track Construction	1110	(800)774-3101
Amusement Business	1031	(615)321-4254
Amusement Electronics Co.	2065	(714)538-7118
Amusement Products, LLC	5037	(423)892-7264
Amusement Products of America	7112	(407)673-3033
Anico	1088	(212)779-3183
ARMS International	8024	(908)262-9776
Ascension Productions	7049	(403)496-9058
Astro Distributing	3077	(309)786-7066
Astro Putt	4062	(706)695-1060
At The Park Magazine	7050	(312)465-4880
ATEC	3111	(702)352-2800
Atlus Co. c/o OPI	4061	(212)889-4722
Autograph Foliages	4066	(216)696-6151
Ball Pit Services	3109	(201)256-5550
Beckman Insurance Agency	1109	(414)797-8160
Best Equipment	4097	(609)374-1400
Betras Plastics	8016	(864)599-0855
Big Apple Card Co.	7080	(954)741-8418
Bob's Space Racers	5045	(904)677-0761
Bonita Marie International	6077	(908)349-1994
Brass Eagle	5115	(501)621-4303
Brunswick Indoor Recreation Group	5050	(616)725-4652
Bullock, Smith & Partners	8033	(423)546-5772
Bullwinkle's International	1028	(714)768-8111
Bumper Buggy	1040	(501)362-2354
C & F Trading Co.	8037	(770)209-0062
Cabtec	1096	(414)779-0179
California Churros	1032	(213)669-4000
Carlisle Tire & Wheel Co.	1093	(717)249-1000
Carol Flemming Costume Design Studio	8113	(209)728-2071
Carpets for Kids etc.	7096	(503)232-1203
Cash Box International Magazine	8029	(612)545-0010
Castle Golf	2060	(602)968-1955
Challenger Industries	3085	(706)278-7707
Chance Rides	4005	(316)942-7411
Characters Unlimited	1030	(702) 294)0563
ChatterBox	2094	(505)761-9901
Chemical Light	1061	(847)520-3266
CleanPlay	3112	(717)560-9935
Cost of Wisconsin	1034	(414)255-4220
Cutting Edge Creations	7110	(612)882-8651
Dan Brechner & Co.	6096	(516)767-6767
DeadSolid Simulation	7009	(717)822-8600
Delta Flex	8027	(909)340-4700

Delta Play Ltd.	8102	(604)591-6612
Deltronic Labs	5093	(215)997-8616
Diamond Games	7092	(818)727-1690
Dinair Airbrush	8109	(818)780-4777
Dinoflex Manufacturing	2109	(250)832-7780
Dixieland Fun Machines Laser Duel	2051	(770)461-9941
Doron Precision Systems	5019	(607)772-1610
Doyle Trading Group	3076	(941)358-8835
Dreamality	7006	(352)383-1257
Durkan Patterned Carpet	3062	(706)278-7037
Duro Sales and Games	6087	(516) 582)2800
E&R Sales	2096	(804)744-8000
Eastern Golf Corporation	6083	(717)689-0560
Entertainment Architecture	3107	(317)255-8875
Entertainment & Leisure USA	7060	(407)293-3040
Entropy USA	8030	(908)506-0002
Events Business News	6097	(609)488-5255
Exidy	6051	(415)364-5201
Eye Catchers	6107	(310)834-7171
Fable Toy Co.	1100	(718)456-8500
Fabricon Carousel Co.	3086	(718)326-7999
FEC Management Magazine	1029	(203)794-0444
Ferris Productions	5003	(602)470-1177
FESCO	1095	(770)922-4559
Festivities Publications	6109	(904)634-1902
FlashBake Ovens	3106	(609)596-9494
Formula K Raceways	2103	(616)668-4574
Foster Manufacturing Corp.	5056	(414)633-7073
Full Swing Golf	5076	(619)675-1100
Fun Center Software	3061	(914)896-5020
Fun Equipment Sales	1115	(210)822-4386
Fun Industries	6103	(309)755-5021
FunTec	1062	(800)845-2830
Green Duck Company	1111	(702)642-2404
G. W. & Assoc.	1046	(405)843-7920
Gardenburger	8023	(310)694-5903
Gemini Sound Products	8103	(908)969-9000
GGB Tech	8112	(612)888-3785
Gilderfluke & Co.	4060	(818)546-1618
Globe Ticket & Label Co.	6071	(404)762-9711
Gold Medal Products Co.	1057	(513)381-1313
Great Games	6080	(313)699.7050
H. Betti Industries	7066	(201)438-1300
Haas & Wilkerson Insurance	8039	(913)432-4400
Hamilton Manufacturing Co.	6063	(419)867-4858
Harris Miniature Golf Courses	6113	(609)522-4200
Heads Up Technologies	1037	(214)407-1131
HEC Services	1118	(407)297-1183
HMS Monaco	7064	(212)239-8700
Hoffman & Hoffman	8111	(408)625-5333
Hollrock Engineering	3045	(413)586-4653
Hydra-Tech	8108	(800)400-9979
I.C.E.	2037	(716)759-0370
IAAPA	4080	(703)836-4800
Ideal Software Systems	6114	(601) 693-1673
Immersive Technologies	5011	(972)699-9122
Inflatable Creations	4115	(619)562-9423
Innovative Computer Systems	1104	(612)949-2507
Interactive Light	4015	(310)581-8411
Intercard	6007	(314)275-8066
International Recreational Go-Kart Association	1097	(210)824-1923
Intertech Corp.	3093	(910)621-1891
J & J Amusements	3009	(503)304-8899
J&J Snack Foods Corp.	3044	(609)665-9533
JP Distributing Inc.	6061	(303)627-1103
K & K Insurance Group	1092	(800)648-6406
K-Lin Specialties Inc.	2111	(714)897-8878
Kart Marketing International	8028	(630)620-6347
Kemac Distributing	5097	(908)240-4612
Kid Zone	4108	(312)935-8295
Kiddie Rides USA	6031	(303)399-7191
Kiddies Manufacturing	2077	(809)897-3180
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KIS/Groupe Photo-Me International PLC	1089	33 4 76 33 3000
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Laser Star Technology	4045	(954)583-3222
Laserforce	7076	(510)654-3444
LaserTron	3025	(954)344-8887
Lavi Industries	1048	(805)257-7800
Lazer-Tron	5083	(510)460-0873
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Little Tikes/Omni	.3037	(818)333-8830
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Magic Ice Products	.6093	(209)464-8832
MagikKastle	.7013	(819)842-4223
Markel Insurance Co.	.1022	(804)527-7539
Mason Corp.	.3056	(615)373-8787
Master Pitching Machine	.1063	(816)452-0228
MedTech-Medical Technology (W.B.) Inc.	.6084	(519)652-1240
Merit Industries	.4057	(215)639-4700
Miniature Golf Association U.S.	.1099	(210)824-1923
Moon-Walk Enterprises	.3060	(313)459-2230
Muncie Novelty Co.	.2048	(317)288-8301
NANCO / Nancy Sales	.4102	(617)884-1700
Nathan's Famous	.1106	(516)338-8500
National Ticket Co.	.4086	(717)672-2900
Naughton Insurance	.7108	(401)433-4000
NBGS International	.2087	(210)620-4000
Neonetics	.8031	(410)521-1962
New York City Economic Development Commission (NYCEDC)	.2107	(212)312-3875
Noel Industries	.6048	(813)785-7630
Novelty Liquidators	.7031	(317)462-3773
Oak Tree Village Express	.1114	(909)795-3990
Olympus Flag & Banner	.2092	(414)355-2010
Oriental Trading Co.	.4031	(402)596-1200
P & H Co./ Flex-a-Lite	.2045	(954)946-0420
Pageantry World Inc.	.7025	(714)373-1996
Pentes Play	.5031	(704)552-2428
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Perky's Foodservice Concepts	.5103	(813)626-6675
Peter F. Olesen & Associates Inc.	8043	(847)253-1515
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Playsafe	.7019	(972)422-1301
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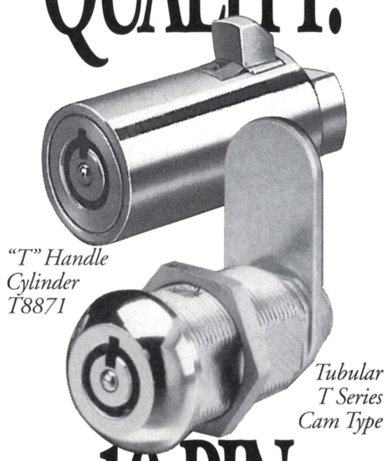

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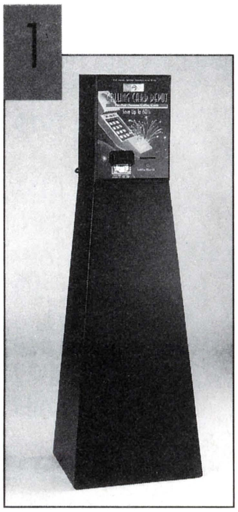
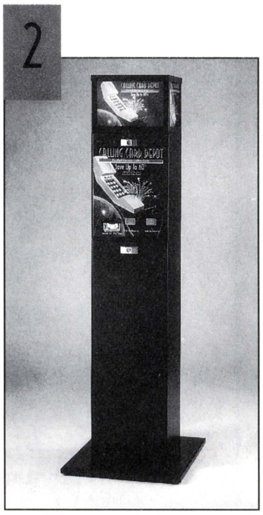


Model 801



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Skee-Ball **5049**
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Sky Fun 1 Inc. **7037**
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Smart Golf **2069**
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Smart Industries Corp. **3096**
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Snazaroo **2028**
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SNK Corp. **3057**
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Soft Play **3084**
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Solo International **8025**
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Spaceball **2083**
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Sportexe **4110**
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Stagecraft **3081**
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Standard Change-Makers **1044**
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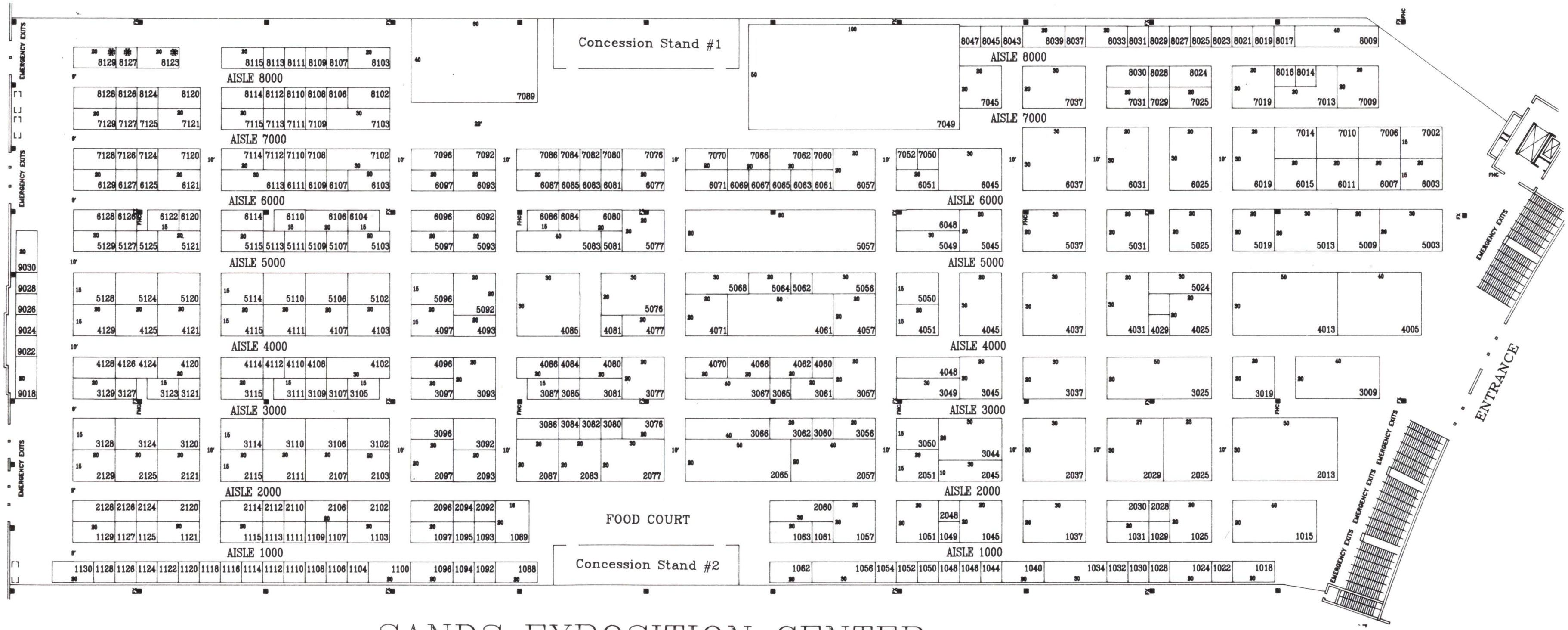
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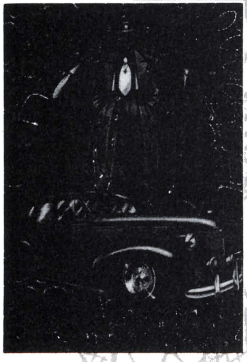

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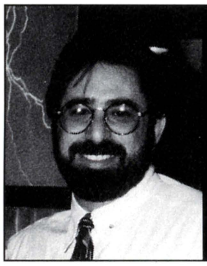

Michael Getlan is a third-generation owner/operator of arcades and family entertainment centers and a member of IAAPA's Education, Technology, and Award Committees. He is director of operations for Amusement Consultants Ltd. of New Rochelle, N.Y., operating 40 locations in 12 U.S. states and Central America, and is a frequent speaker at industry conventions.

How do you know what is going on in your location? How can you tell if your guests are receiving great customer service? How do you know if your facilities are being kept clean and up to date? Only one way—get out of the office and out on the floor!

CONSTANT CONTACT

The key to keeping tabs on your facility's service level is constant contact with your staff members, your guests, and your products. You should speak to your staff members on a regular basis, and if you have a managerial staff, speak to those managers who are in contact with your guests. Inquire about guest complaints and any suggestions or requests. Implement these with speed or your competition may do so and gain a competitive advantage.

Talking to your guests helps to bring that "personal touch" to your facility. People want to know that their comments have reached a concerned ear and that their opinions count. Listen carefully and you may find the germ of an idea that can significantly alter your plans. Remember that your facility exists to satisfy your guests—so listen to them. It's not easy, especially for junior staff members, but listening to your customers is an important key to success.

Rewarding your guests who offer suggestions will encourage similar behavior in other guests as word gets around. In addition to listening, use response cards or questionnaires to gather the information and take action as soon as possible. Give credit for these changes to guests and watch them bring all their friends in to "see what they have done."

CONSTANT COACHING

Observing your facility must be done at various times and shifts. Seeing the store at the same time every day or week will help during that particular shift, but will not strengthen the staff as a whole. Try to observe how things are done and coach staff members to improve the quality of their service. Change your routine. Become familiar with as many different staff members as possible. Ask for their opinions and suggestions and try to give credit to any staff members who contribute to change. This will support and acknowledge contributing staff and encourage others to offer suggestions.

Bring around other family members or friends to act as a "personal shopper service." This will give you feedback on your staff's performance without influencing them by being there yourself. Tell your staff that this will occur—no surprises here. Remember to reward great behavior, and correct behaviors and attitudes that are below par. Always use the opportunity to coach your staff.

Observing your facility means checking bathrooms, kitchen areas, storerooms, and work areas. Check for cleanliness and safety. Remember that parking lots and bathrooms give lasting and immediate impressions of your facility. Observing your facility also means testing your products. This can be the most enjoyable part of your job. Every business person must hire, fire, train, and schedule personnel, and pay bills, but how many jobs offer the possibility of playing games, riding rides, and tasting food as part of the job description? (Be careful how much food you taste!)

Play, touch, and taste everything as often as possible. Remember that most guests do not tell your staff members if equipment is defective or if products are unsatisfactory. Guests tend to simply go away and tell others about their experiences. Try to find out about defective products or services before your guests do.

CONSTANT COMPARISONS

Getting out of the office also gives you a chance to check out the competition. How well are they doing in the critical areas of customer service and cleanliness? An advantage that you have when checking out the competition is that you can observe them in the guise of a regular customer. In your own facilities, it is hard to get a true reading on service because your staff knows who you are (if you really do get out onto the floor).

But in the competition's locations, you can observe without your presence affecting the performance of their staff. See how your problems (real or imagined) are handled by your competition. Take your managers with you. (Don't forget to dress as normal people, without your uniforms!) Let them make comparisons and then always seek improvement in your operations.

CONSTANT IMPROVEMENTS

Regardless of the level of your competition, you should always seek constant improvement. Ask yourself, "How can we do better tomorrow? What can be changed? What should be changed to better prepare us for changes in the market and in the expectations of our customer base?" Changes are inevitable, and those who are better prepared for change will win the additional market share that changes make available. ▲

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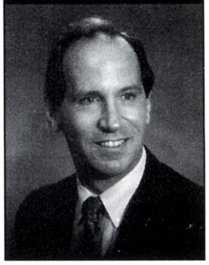


TOM FRICKE

THE INTERNET

A NEW THREAT?

Jim Pietrangelo of AMA Distributing in Metairie, La., was surfing the Internet. After reading a newspaper report, he looked up a bill before the Legislature that would ban Internet gaming. The text of the bill appeared on his monitor:

> ***Gambling by computer is the intentional conducting or directly assisting in the conducting of any game, contest, lottery, or contrivance whereby a person risks the loss of anything of value in order to realize a profit using any computer, computer system, computer software, or any server accessing the Internet, World Wide Web, or any part thereof.***
>
> ***...Whoever designs, develops, maintains, provides, or produces any computer services, computer systems, computer network, computer software, or any server providing a home page, Web site, or any other product accessing the Internet, World Wide Web, or any part thereof offering to any client the conducting of any game, contest, lottery, or contrivance whereby a person risks the loss of anything of value in order to realize a profit shall be fined not more than $20,000 or imprisoned with or without hard labor for not more than five years, or both.***

By now Jim was paying close attention to the information rushing at him from the Legislature's Web site. He must have been thinking, "They want to make it a crime to play a game—any game—on computers over the Internet. All you would need to be eligible for a five-year sentence would be a risk, a profit, and any game and (oh, yes) use of the Internet with a computer. What will this do to tournament play for prizes?"

The bill's sponsor was Rep. Tony Perkins. This gentleman has a 100 percent voting record on Christian Coalition issues and is about as outspoken an opponent to all forms of gaming as dwells in Louisiana. His colleagues in the anti-gambling faction of the Legislature had already introduced a bill to repeal legalized video poker. The bill passed the Senate but the House stopped it. Now, in the same session, this gambling by computer bill appeared. Could Rep. Perkins have been attempting to repeal video poker legislation by the back door? When Jim discovered the bill, it was due for a floor vote in the Senate just two days later.

Where was LAMOA? On the job, definitely, but preoccupied with defending legalized video poker from direct attack. Its lobbyists and those who represent individual operators had indeed negotiated an amendment to the bill. The amendment was to be offered in the Senate and would make an exception from the overbroad definition of the crime, but that exception would narrow. It would only apply to licensed video poker. Jim asked the LAMOA board to try again.

"AT LEAST TWO STATE ATTORNEYS GENERAL HAVE ISSUED FORMAL OPINIONS TO THE EFFECT THAT THEIR STATES' EXISTING CRIMINAL LAWS WOULD BE VIOLATED BY A PERSON USING A COMPUTER TO GAMBLE ON THE INTERNET."

LAMOA had allies in its second effort to minimize the damage of the gambling by computer bill. The operative elements, (1) risk, (2) contrivance, and (3) profit were so broad that (according to lobbyist Alton Ashy, who worked to carry the industry's message about this bill) the telephone companies and several securities houses were concerned that the bill would criminalize several legitimate business activities if it were passed in its original form. Their legislative teams had joined LAMOA in some earnest last-minute negotiation of a long list of exceptions. As finally passed, the exceptions include transactions in stocks and bonds and communication services. Except for video poker, our industry's exception was less direct than the others. A game involving consideration (and therefore a risk of a financial loss) and the possibility of profit (derived from a prize with a value in excess of the consideration paid) is still a Louisiana crime whether the game be one of chance or one of skill but (with a last minute amendment to the bill) this is true only if the activity is conducted "as a business."

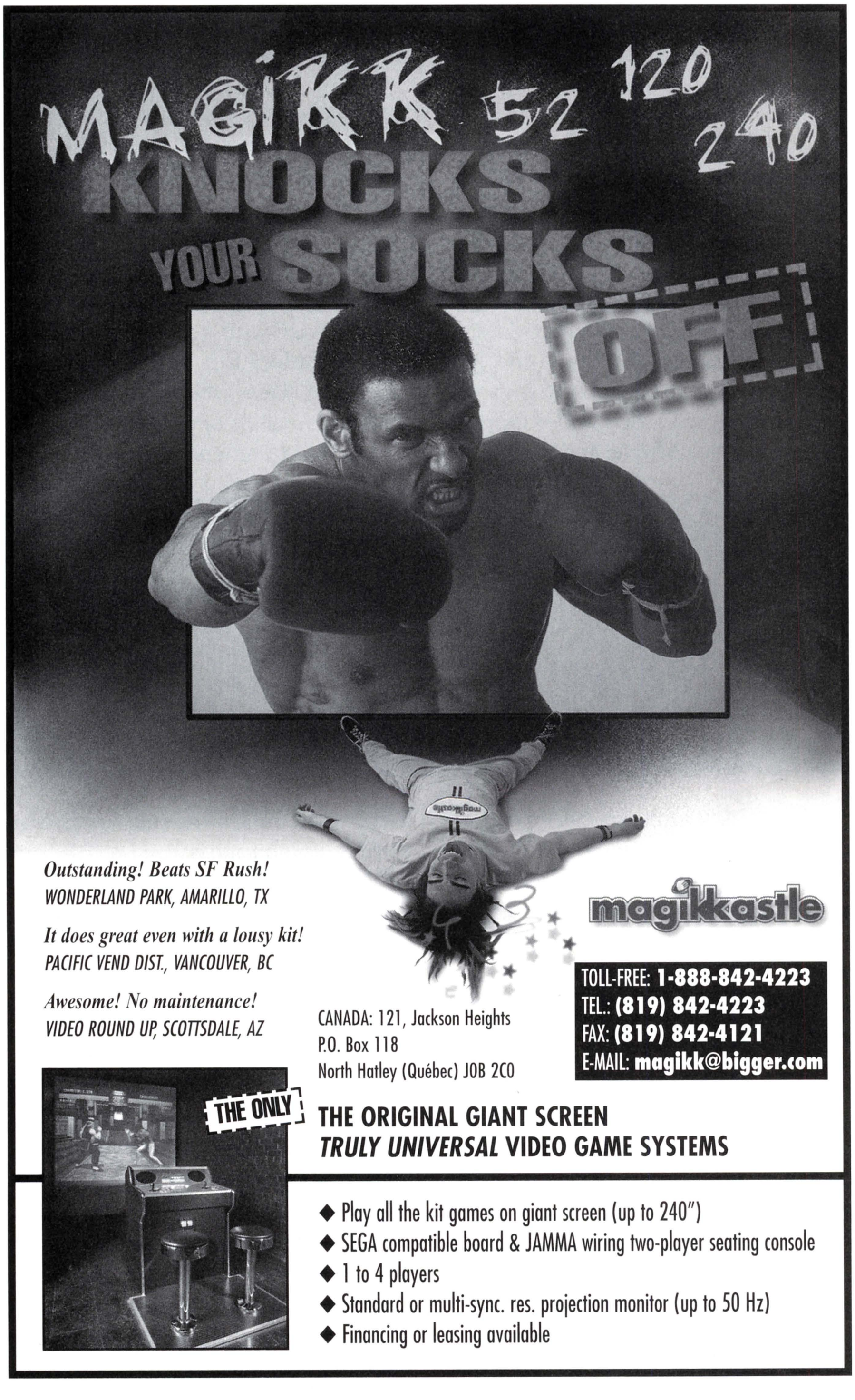
What does "as a business" mean? If I operate a skill tournament using video games at remote sites, I guess you could say that I do so "as a business." Perhaps the only headway made in the last few days before passage of the bill was to spare the customer's activity from being criminalized but not that of the operator. (This is a little bit like Prohibition. The Vollstead Act outlawed the sale and distribution of liquor, but not the consumption of it.)

According to Ashy, Rep. Perkins is regarded to be a man of his word. Accordingly, you can take it that he is sincere in stating that his intentions with respect to the gambling by computer were straightforward and that he was not attempting to achieve video poker repeal in a devious way. Moreover, gambling on the Internet is a serious problem—one which could potentially unite those who oppose gambling on moral or social grounds, those who operate (or wish to operate) licensed gambling activities, and those who operate prize games for amusement purposes. However, Internet gambling presents complex legal issues requiring a legislative response shaped by an assessment of the entire state and federal scheme of defining, prohibiting, and regulating gambling. In my view, to take the short cut of merely plugging a new crime definition into an already outmoded and archaic system of laws relating to gambling, is folly.

Was this particular redefinition of a Louisiana gambling crime necessary? The Internet together with a computer and an ATM card, in effect puts a slot machine in every home. These slot machines are run by anonymous, unregulated proprietors who are deterred from the practice of collecting all wagers and paying no winners only by whatever honesty they may possess. Pirate casino Web sites and their owners are characteristically located in places that are beyond federal jurisdiction, let alone that of any state. The problem is such that it is a major issue on the agenda of the National Gambling Impact Study Commission. In addition, the National Association of Attorneys General has established a working group to establish and examine the adequacy of state and federal laws to prohibit the business of unregulated wagering being made available to every home and to recommend those changes in state and federal laws necessary to enforce such a prohibition.

The problem has never been that a state's definition of prohibited gambling activity would not include activity utilizing as its particular instrumentality, the Internet. Indeed, at least two state attorneys general have issued formal opinions to the effect that their states' existing criminal laws would be violated by a person using a computer to gamble on the Internet within their respective states. For all that has been written about gambling on the Internet (and the literature on this subject is growing rapidly) substantially no commentary has been directed at the adequacy of state criminal definitions.

Rather, the legal uncertainty stems from the jurisdiction to prosecute the owner or operator of a Web site or computer billboard operated beyond the state's borders. The other issue under scrutiny is the adequacy of existing federal statutes to reach criminal gambling activity involving computer billboards and Web pages. What appears to have everybody stumped is what to do about Web pages owned and operated on foreign territory beyond United States jurisdiction. You will notice that none of this examination of our



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law of gambling includes attention to redefinition of state gambling crimes.

Public issues related to gambling tend to involve the heated clash of opposing, intensely committed interests and the desire of their advocates to demonstrate to those constituencies that they are doing their job. I speculate that this is why Rep. Perkins introduced a bill that wasn't needed to protect the citizens of Louisiana from the very real danger of unrestricted, unregulated Internet wagering.

Here's the irony of the whole affair. The representative's bill called to the attention of at least three groups that its overbroad prohibition might criminalize their business activities. These groups all responded, obtained varying degrees of legislative relief immediately, and obtained, according to Ashy, the assurances of substantially every legislator contacted that there was no intention to restrict communications common carrier activities, transactions in securities, or location-based entertainment involving amusement redemption. Nevertheless, Rep. Perkins' bill would have done nothing more than apply a criminal definition on the books in Louisiana since 1944 to a particular instrumentality which might be used in committing the crime. Despite all the concern of these groups and all of the frenzied discussion concerning what was really intended by the Legislature and what was required in the text of the bill to obviate unintended harm to legitimate activity, the text of another section of the Louisiana Criminal Code, borrowed by Rep. Perkins for his gambling by computer bill, remains in full effect.

Although it has never been enforced in this way, if taken literally, the text of this section could be the basis for the same unexpected restriction on legitimate activity that was the cause of such concern in respect to the gambling by computer bill. I am talking about section 90 of the part of the Louisiana Criminal Code which provides the basic definition of all Louisiana gambling crimes. It too defines the offense in terms of placing something at risk and hoping to realize a profit. It too makes no mention of how the game is actually played. Although (to repeat) it has never been enforced in this way. In Louisiana you could conceivably be throwing balls through hoops and violating the law. Do you think I am kidding? Here is the text:

"Gambling is the intentional conducting, or directly assisting in the conducting, as a business, of any game, contest, lottery, or contrivance whereby a person risks the loss of anything of value in order to realize a profit." ▲

Tom Fricke is a St. Louis-based attorney who specializes in legal issues relating to the amusement game business. He serves as chairman of the IAFEC government relations committee and can be reached at (314)361-6672.

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Winning the tax game is only half the victory

Recently, we read an article entitled "What Makes for Success" by Kemmons Wilson, the founder of Holiday Inn. He said, "It is great to attain wealth, but money is really just one way—and hardly the best way—to keep score."

Interesting quote, huh? Most readers of this column call me with tax problems because they have attained wealth (no doubt they have and do keep score in money) and they don't want to share that wealth with the IRS. It's amazing. Once the reader realizes that we really do know how to pass their wealth—all of it intact—to their family, the conversation turns to other ways that they keep score. Sure, they are delighted to find there are legal ways to totally win the estate tax game. But they readily admit that they don't know how to deal with the other problems (or other ways to keep score).

The other problems fall into the general category of little kids, little problems—big kids, big problems. Issues such as how to treat the children fairly arise. What about the nonbusiness kids? What happens if one (or more) of my kids gets divorced? How do I take care of my wife (the second one who is 15 years younger than the caller)? You think of the family problem, business problem, or personal problem and chances are we've listened to that tale of woe.

Let's face it. Things happen. After years of solving wealth transfer (usually the business is at center stage) and estate planning problems, we have found that solving all the money problems alone is never a complete plan. The human stuff—your spouse and kids support your plan—must be solved too. We know it sounds cornball. But if you really want to win the game of life after you have won the money game, you must work with professionals who know how to solve the emotional issues that come with accumulating wealth and passing it on. One more thing: each piece of your plan must be part of a single comprehensive plan implemented at the same time. Piecemeal planning, based on 35 years of experience, is a disaster that enriches the IRS instead of your family.

SECOND OPINION ENRICHES READER

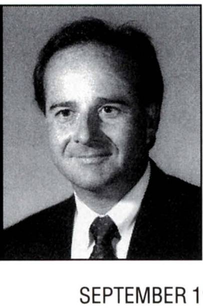
We love when readers of this column call. This is the true story of a reader (let's call him Joe) who called. This was Joe's complaint. He had been working on a combination lifetime/estate plan for years with his professional advisors. The plan just couldn't seem to get done. Joe wanted to get a second opinion on what was in place and tie up the loose ends.

Joe's goals are divided into two time frames—during his life and after his death. His lifetime goals are to: keep working, but at a slower pace, until the day he dies; keep the business (Success Co., a C corporation) growing; build his management team that currently is handling day-to-day operations; minimize income taxes; and not sell the business. His after-death goals are: keep the business in the family (his two sons would own it 50/50 after Joe's wife, Jan, died) and minimize estate taxes. One of Joe's sons, a successful doctor, is not active in the business and never will be. The other works in the business but has no management skills.

It became apparent that Joe's present tax plan was beating him up income tax wise and, that upon his death, Success Co. would probably have to be sold to pay taxes and to avoid putting the bulk of his wealth (Success Co. represents about 80 percent of his wealth and is growing in

IRVING BLACKMAN

Irving Blackman and Brian Whitlock are CPAs with Blackman, Kallick, Bartelstein LLP in Chicago. Also lawyers, they specialize in business succession and wealth transfer. Both are sought-after speakers. Want to consult? Need a second opinion? Contact them at (312)207-1040; fax (312)207-1066. Their special reports are available at a nominal fee.


BRIAN WHITLOCK

value every year) at economic risk.

Here's a list of some of the more important tax-saving techniques we used to help Joe accomplish his goals. Some hints and reasons are given parenthetically, but most of the techniques are designed to keep Joe in control of his personal wealth for as long as he lives, reduce the value of Success Co. for estate purposes, and slash overall taxes.

❶Success Co. will elect S corporation status. (Joe will take an S corporation dividend out each year, supplemented by withdrawals from his profit sharing plan to assure maintaining his and Jan's lifestyle without suffering a second income tax.)

❷All major equipment will be purchased by Joe, who will then lease it to Success Co.

❸All insurance policies (over $1 million) on Joe's life owned by Success Co. will be transferred to Joe and then to an irrevocable life insurance trust. (Both transfers are income tax free and get the insurance out of his and Jan's estate.)

❹Joe and Jan will buy $1.5 million of last-to-die life insurance using a second irrevocable life insurance trust. (This will transfer all of the estate tax liability to the insurance carrier.)

❺Joe and Jan will immediately make a gift of $1.1 million of Success Co. nonvoting stock to their sons, followed by $40,000 gifts of nonvoting stock each year. (None of these gifts will kick up any current gift tax payable to the IRS in cash. Also, this will almost eliminate the value of Success Co. stock in Joe's estate.)

❻Joe will control Success Co. for as long as he lives by keeping the nonvoting stock.

❼Success Co. will be professionally appraised to make sure the IRS cannot prevail if it chooses to attract the value of the stock gifts to his sons.

After all the smoke clears, Joe's family will save about $150,000 a year in income taxes and payroll taxes. The potential estate tax liability has been reduced from over $2 million to under $500,000 (to be paid by tax-free life insurance proceeds).

The above does not cover every aspect of Joe's personal, business, and tax problems, the alternatives considered, or the possible tax traps. If Joe's shoes fit you, get professional advice so you have two separate pairs of shoes custom made to fit you just right—one for lifetime tax planning and a second for estate planning.

For more on this topic, send for the special reports: "Transfer Your Corporation to the Next Generation," "How to Value Your Business for Tax Purposes," and "Pay Zero Estate Tax."

GRANDMA WHIPS THE IRS

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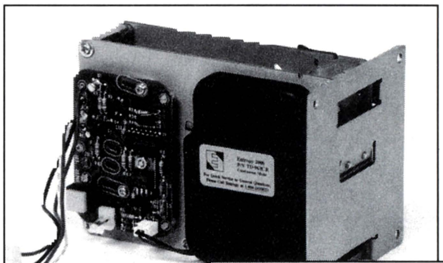

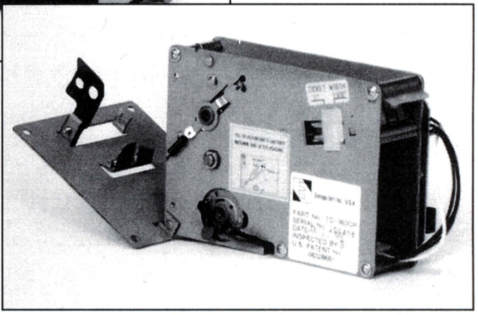

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owner of a family business, the owner often asks, "What can I do with the assets I own outside of the business?" Well, this tax court case opens a tax-saving door to help you whip the IRS.

First, some basic gift-tax law: You can give $10,000 per year per donee (the person receiving the gift) free of gift tax. If you're married, double it to $20,000. This is called the annual exclusion. What most people don't know is that you only get the exclusion if you give a present interest ("Here's $10,000 son. Keep it or spend it as you choose.") Give a future interest (Here, Mr. Trustee, is $10,000 for the benefit of my son. Use it for his college education.") and you blow the annual exclusion. That $10,000 future interest is a taxable gift. Ouch!

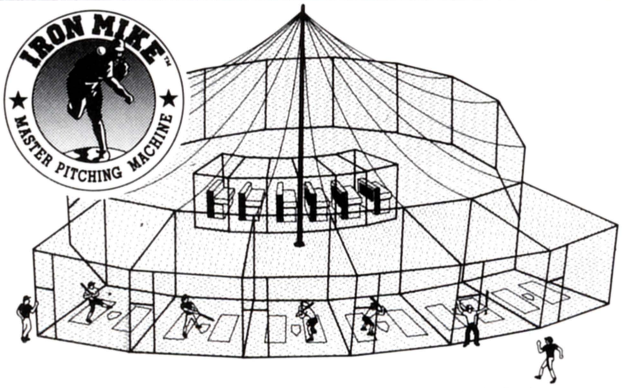
Now that you know the rules, apply them to this real-life tax case (Cristofani, T.C., 3/23/92). You be the judge.

Here are the facts: Maria Cristofani set up a trust for her children, Frank and Lillian. Both could receive income, or even principal, for their support, health, maintenance, and education (unquestionably a future interest). At Maria's death, the trust was to be distributed to Frank and Lillian, or if either died before Maria, his or her share was to go to his or her children (Maria's five grandchildren, ages five to 13). In 1984, and again in 1985, Maria transferred $70,000 of property to the trust. Frank, Lillian, and Maria's five grandchildren could each withdraw up to $10,000 from the trust within 15 days after the $70,000 transfer to the trust was made. None of them exercised their right to withdraw, even though the trustees notified the children and grandchildren of the transfers, as required by the trust.

The IRS allowed the $20,000 exclusion for Frank and Lillian, but turned thumbs down on the $50,000 exclusion total for the five grandchildren. How do you rule? Does Maria get the extra $50,000 in tax-free exclusions?

If you said yes, you agreed with the tax court. This is a big victory for our side. Simply put, you can put money in trust for anyone you choose—either a current beneficiary (like Frank and Lillian) or a contingent beneficiary (like the grandchildren) who only get a benefit from the trust if Frank or Lillian should die before Maria. But get this. By giving all the beneficiaries notice and 15 days to take their $10,000, you convert the future interest into a present interest. The result: no taxable gift. Sounds logical to me! ▲

Want to learn how to use the Cristofani case to save tax on every $10,000 gift to a trust and beat both the gift and estate tax? Send for the special reports: "Pay Zero Estate Tax the Super Trust Way," "How You Can Beat the Estate Tax," and "The Secret to Free Wealth Transfer—Family Limited Partnerships."



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TECHNICAL **TOPICS**

RANDY FROMM

A Play Meter Monthly Exclusive

NEOTEC monitor circuits with troubleshooting flowchart

Holiday Inn had an advertising slogan awhile back: "The best surprise is no surprise." It's the same in "technicianing" as well. Working on an unfamiliar piece of equipment can force even the best of technicians to start at the bottom and work back up to the top of the learning curve. Heck, just figuring out how to get into a new game can take 10 or 15 minutes if you've never seen the thing before.

But when you take your first look at something that's new, but completely familiar, you immediately feel more comfortable and can get right down to troubleshooting. Remember, if you're seeing something for the first time and it's broke, you have to figure out how it's supposed to work before you can fix it. It really helps when you know what the heck is going on.

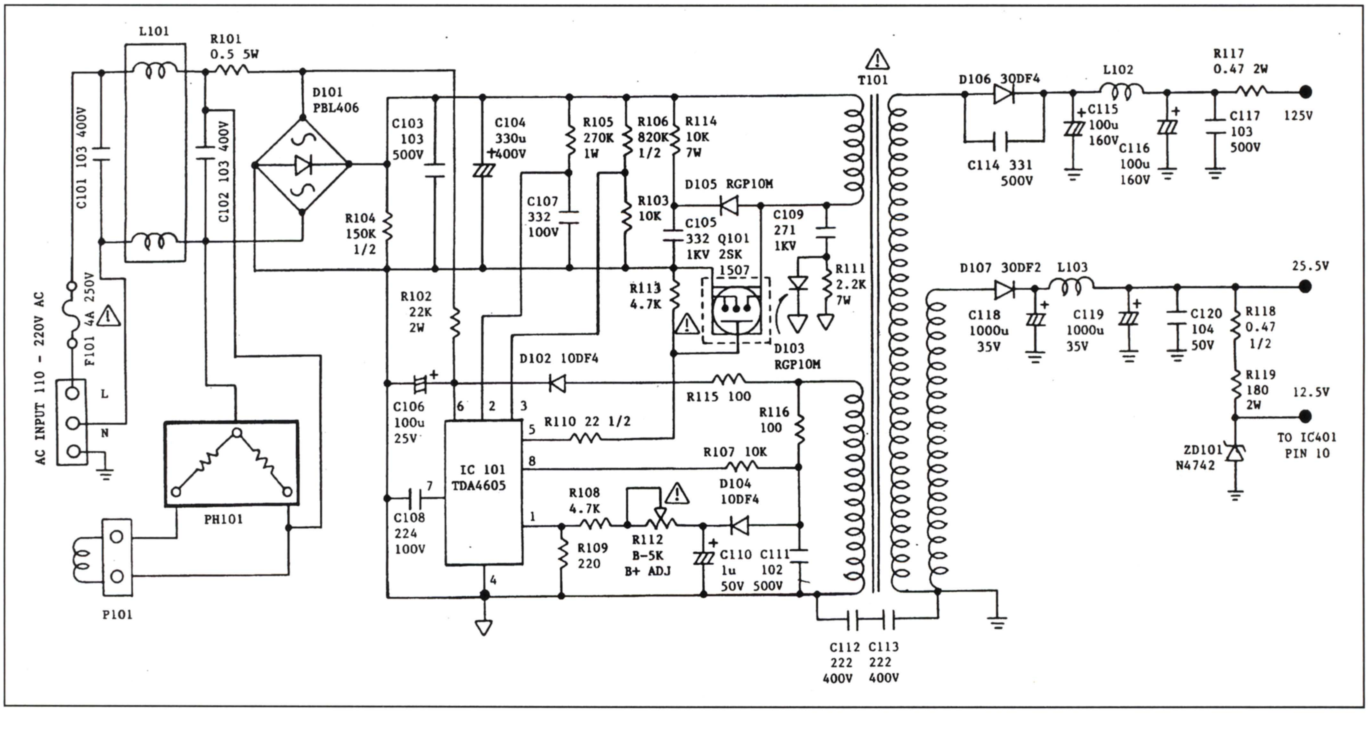
Well, familiar circuits is what Neotec's NT-2515C / NT-25E monitor is all about. This monitor has a logical and straightforward design that makes troubleshooting a breeze in most cases. There is almost nothing unusual about this design. I think that's good. The schematic diagram is crowded onto the page and can be a bit difficult to read in spots but it was done in order to get it all in an easily copyable and faxable 8-1/2" x 11" format. I think that's good too. With that in mind, let's take a look at the monitor circuits, breezing over the common stuff and looking at a couple of interesting circuits.

POWER SUPPLY

This monitor uses a switch-mode power supply (SMPS) instead of a linear (also known as a "conventional") power supply. The use of a switching supply eliminates the need for an isolation transformer and allows the monitor to work on AC line voltages from 90 to 260 volts. This makes it an especially good monitor choice where the AC line voltage isn't constant.

AC power enters through F101. In this monitor, just about the only things that will blow this fuse are Q101 (the FET) and, rarely, the bridge rectifier D101. C101, C102, C103, L101, and L102 provide filtering to prevent high-frequency switcher noise from being conducted back onto the AC line.

A degaussing coil, connected to P101, is wrapped around the bell of



L101
R101 0.5 5W
D101 PBL406
C101 103 400V
C102 103 400V
C103 103 500V
C104 330u 400V
R105 270K 1W
R106 820K 1/2
R114 10K 7W
T101
D106 30DF4
L102
R117 0.47 2W
125V
C115 100u 160V
C116 100u 160V
C117 103 500V
C114 331 500V
D105 RGP10M
R103 10K
C107 332 100V
R104 150K 1/2
C105 332 1KV
Q101 2SK 1507
C109 271 1KV
R111 2.2K 7W
D103 RGP10M
R113 4.7K
R102 22K 2W
D107 30DF2
L103
25.5V
C118 1000u 35V
C119 1000u 35V
C120 104 50V
R118 0.47 1/2
R119 180 2W
12.5V
TO IC401 PIN 10
ZD101 N4742
AC INPUT 110 - 220V AC
F101 4A 250V
L
N
PH101
P101
D102 10DF4
R115 100
C106 100u 25V
IC 101 TDA4605
R110 22 1/2
R116 100
R107 10K
C108 224 100V
R108 4.7K
D104 10DF4
R109 220
R112 B-5K B+ ADJ
C110 1u 50V
C111 102 500V
C112 222 400V
C113 222 400V
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8

the CRT. AC current is passed through this coil for the purpose of neutralizing residual magnetic fields in and around the face of the CRT. PH101, which controls the degaussing current, is a dual element PTC thermistor. The first element has a low resistance and delivers surge current to the degaussing coil during power-up. As the temperature of this element rises, its resistance increases, and the degaussing current diminishes. The second element generates additional heat in the PTC, reducing the degaussing current to a negligible amount.

D101 is a full-wave bridge rectifier. R101 is a .5 ohm resistor which limits the surge current through the bridge rectifier during power-on. C104 filters the full-wave voltage into DC. The remainder of the power supply circuitry constitutes the DC-to-DC converter. In the event of excessive current demand from the main B+ rail, the switcher is designed to shut-down its output. U101 shuts-down its output at pin 5, eliminating failure within the switcher. Periodically, the switcher attempts to restart. If the fault persists, it will once again shut itself down. This condition can be heard as a faint "ticking" within the switching supply.

On the output side of the SMPS, there is not only the B+ output of +125 volts DC but a 25.5 volt DC output as well. This +25.5 volt power supply is used to power the vertical output stage of the vertical deflection circuit. I like this idea very much. It takes some of the load off the flyback transformer which is normally used to derive this power supply in other monitor designs.

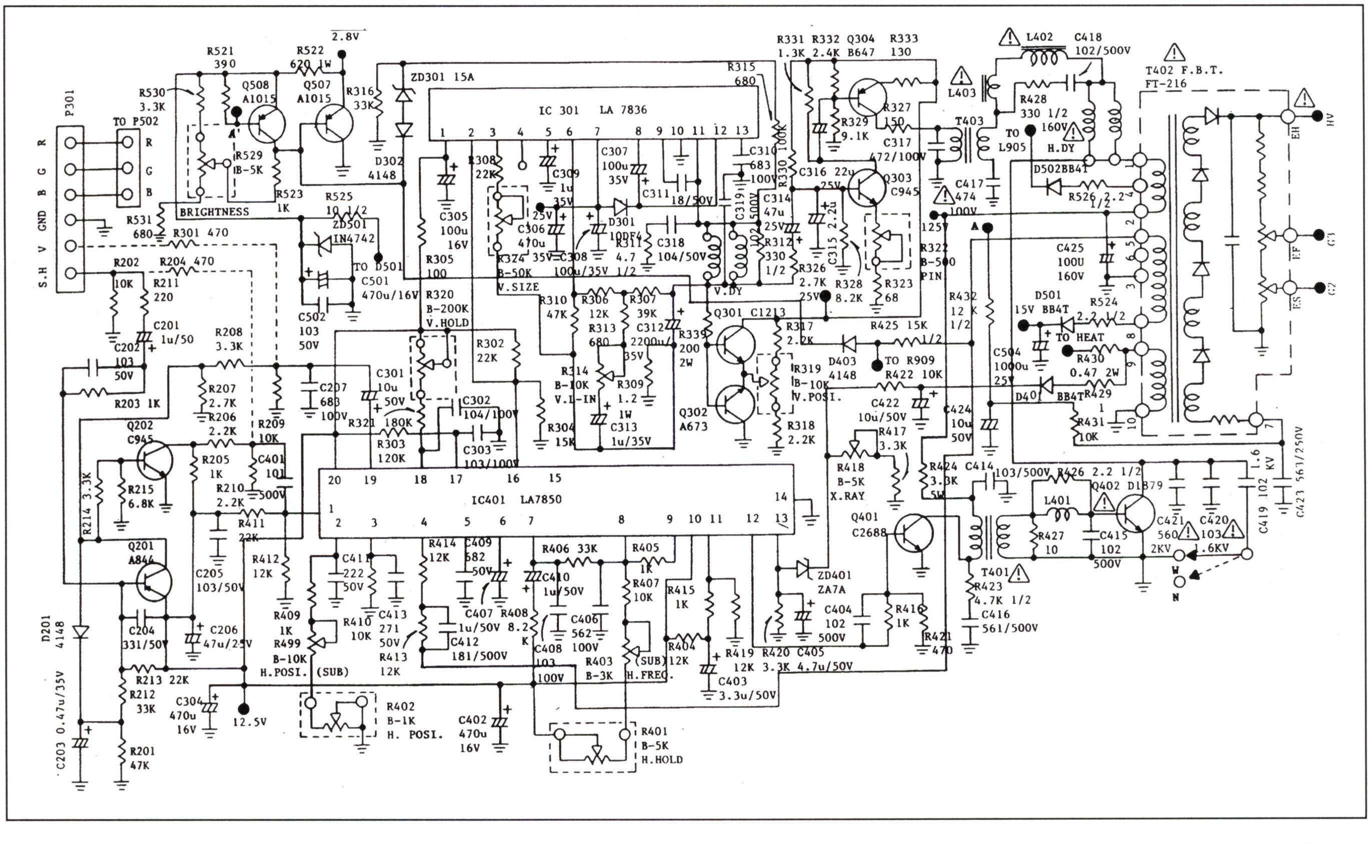
The 25.5 volt power supply is dropped across two resistors (in series), R118 and R119, and pegged at 12.5 volts by a zener diode, ZD101. This is a common 12 volt zener, a 1N4742. Don't leave home without it.

Technicians note: As with virtually all switching power supplies, the primary side of the power supply is connected directly to the AC line. Never connect any part of the primary circuit to earth ground. Grounding the live primary circuit (through either an oscilloscope ground or the grounded tip of a soldering station) WILL cause some serious fireworks.

Also, you must never use a "Variac" (a variable AC transformer) on the AC input unless it is set for a voltage somewhere in the operating range (90 to 260 volts) of the monitor. Any monitor with an SMPS will not operate at all (even at a reduced level) unless the AC input is at least a minimum voltage (that's why it's called a minimum... duh...) You might also cause damage to the power supply, although this is not likely in a well-designed supply like this.

VIDEO CIRCUITS

The three video amplifiers and, in fact, all video circuitry, is on the neck board. This monitor uses an off-the-shelf, LM1203 video amplifier integrated circuit to amplify the incoming video signal from the game. The video output from the LM1203 is directly coupled to the base of each of the predriver transistors, Q901, Q902, and Q903. These, in turn, drive the three video output transistors, Q904, Q905,


P301
R
G
B
GND
V
H
S
TO P502
BRIGHTNESS
R530 3.3K
R521 390
Q508 A1015
R522 620 1W
2.8V
Q507 A1015
R316 33K
ZD301 15A
IC 301 LA 7836
R315 680
D302 4148
ZD501 1N4742
TO D501
C501 470u/16V
V.SIZE
V.HOLD
V.LIN
V.POSI.
Q301 C1213
Q302 A673
R331 R332 Q304 R333
1.3K 2.4K B647 130
Q303 C945
L402
C418 102/500V
T402 F.B.T. FT-216
L403
T403
TO L905
H.DY
D502BB41
R526 2.2 1/2
C425 100U 160V
D501 15V BB4T
R524 2.2 1/2
TO HEAT
R430 0.47 2W
D401 BB4T
R429
R431 10K
TO R909
R422 10K
R425 15K
D403 4148
X.RAY
HV
G1
G2
EH
EF
ES
IC401 LA7850
Q202 C945
Q201 A844
D201 4148
C203 0.47u/35V
R201 47K
R212 33K
R213 22K
C304 470u 16V
12.5V
R409 1K
R499 B-10K H.POSI.
(SUB)
R402 B-1K H. POSI.
C402 470u 16V
R401 B-5K H.HOLD
R403 B-3K
H.FREQ.
Q401 C2688
Q402 D1879
L401
T401
ZD401 ZA7A
C416 561/500V
R423 4.7K 1/2
C421 560 2KV
C420 103 .6KV
C419 102 1.6KV
C423 561/250V

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and Q906. Again, as with many monitors, the +160 volt power supply for the video output stage is a flyback-derived power supply; a tap on the primary winding of the flyback.

An interesting note is Q907. The drive signal for this transistor comes from D403 on the main PCB and is the "clamp" signal that controls the black level and the blanking as well. If your symptom is "raster but no video" or a picture covered with vertical retrace lines, this would be a good place to begin testing.

BUILD YOUR OWN CAP KIT

Probably the single most important tool for monitor repair isn't really a tool at all but a simple bag of replacement capacitors. Simple if you have them, that is. There's very little that's more frustrating than letting a 50-cent replacement part stand between you and a successful repair.

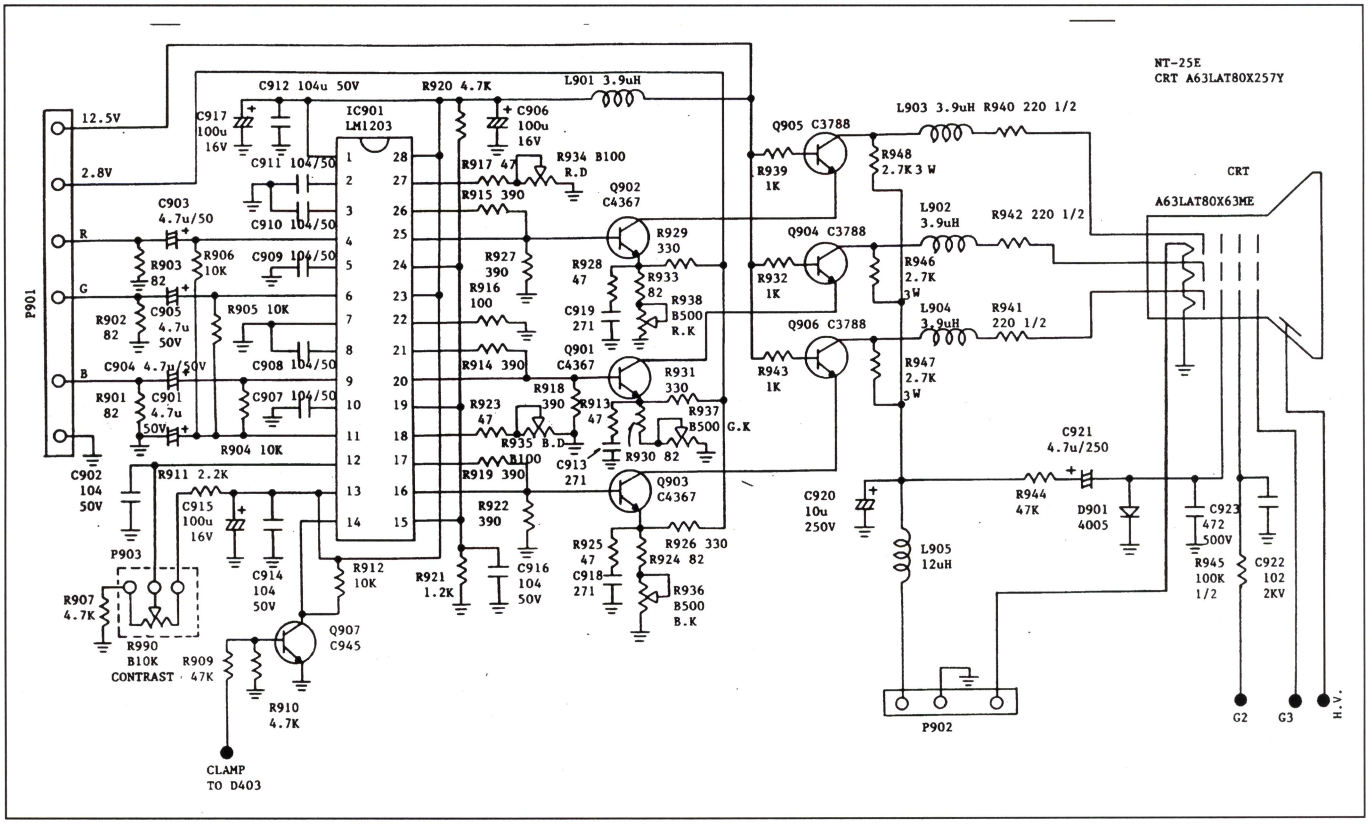
Here is a list of all the electrolytic capacitors plus the one tantalum capacitor. The electrolytic capacitors are, of course, guaranteed to fail eventually. That's why it's a good idea to replace 'em all at once. Note that capacitor C316 is a non-polarized type.

1UF/50V	**C11O C201 C407 C410**
2.2UF/50V	**C315**
3.3UF/50V	**C403**
5 - 4.7UF/50V	**C405 C901 C903 C904 C905**
4.7UF/250V	**C921**
3 -10UF/50V	**C301 C422 C424**
10UF/250V	**C920**
22UF/25V NP	**C316**
2 - 47UF/25V	**C314 C206**
4 - 100UF/16V	**C305 C906 C915 C917**
100UF/25V	**C106 C504**
100UF/35V	**C307 C308**
3 - 100UF/160V	**C115 C116 C425**
330UF/400V	**C104**
3 - 470UF/16V	**C304 C402 C501**
470UF/35V	**C306**
2 -1000UF/35V	**C118 C119**
2200UF/35V	**C312**
0 .47UF/35V	**C203**
2 - 1UF/35V Tantalum	**C309 C313**

So, what's the deal with C309 and C313, the tantalum capacitors? What's the difference between tantalum and electrolyic capacitors? Can you exchange one for another? For the straight poop, I turned to KEMET. KEMET is the largest manufacturer and supplier of solid tantalum capacitors in the world. If the following doesn't make any sense to you, don't sweat it. As far as my personal experience is concerned, I have not experienced any problems substituting an electrolytic capacitor where a tantalum capacitor is original equipment. I've never tried using a tantalum in place of an electrolytic so I can't say what might happen there.

Solid tantalum capacitors require less circuit board space. Solid tantalum capacitors are smaller than equivalent aluminum capacitors because tantalum has a higher dielectric constant and the entire material system is more volumetrically efficient.

Solid tantalum capacitors exhibit a declining failure rate. Solid tantalum capacitors have indefinite life with no known wearout mechanism. Aluminum capacitors do have a wearout


NT-25E
CRT A63LAT80X257Y
P901
12.5V
2.8V
R
G
B
C917 100u 16V
C912 104u 50V
R920 4.7K
L901 3.9uH
IC901 LM1203
C906 100u 16V
C911 104/50
C910 104/50
C909 104/50
C908 104/50
C907 104/50
C903 4.7u/50
R903 82
R906 10K
C905 4.7u 50V
R902 82
R905 10K
C904 4.7u/50V
R901 82
C901 4.7u 50V
R904 10K
C902 104 50V
R911 2.2K
C915 100u 16V
C914 104 50V
P903
R907 4.7K
R990 B10K CONTRAST
R909 47K
R910 4.7K
R912 10K
Q907 C945
CLAMP TO D403
R917 47
R934 B100 R.D
R915 390
Q902 C4367
R927 390
R916 100
R928 47
C919 271
R929 330
R933 82
R938 B500 R.K
R914 390
Q901 C4367
R918 390
R923 47
R913 47
R931 330
R937 B500 G.K
R935 B.D
R919 B100
R930 82
C913 271
R919 390
Q903 C4367
R922 390
R921 1.2K
C916 104 50V
R925 47
C918 271
R926 330
R924 82
R936 B500 B.K
Q905 C3788
R939 1K
Q904 C3788
R932 1K
Q906 C3788
R943 1K
L903 3.9uH
R940 220 1/2
R948 2.7K 3 W
L902 3.9uH
R942 220 1/2
R946 2.7K 3W
L904 3.9uH
R941 220 1/2
R947 2.7K 3W
CRT
A63LAT80X63ME
C921 4.7u/250
R944 47K
D901 4005
C920 10u 250V
L905 12uH
C923 472 500V
R945 100K 1/2
C922 102 2KV
P902
G2
G3
H.V.

mechanism and they do have a finite life. This life period depends on voltage applied and operating temperature. As the electrolyte is lost through the gasketed seals, aluminum capacitors lose capacitance and exhibit significant increases in ESR.

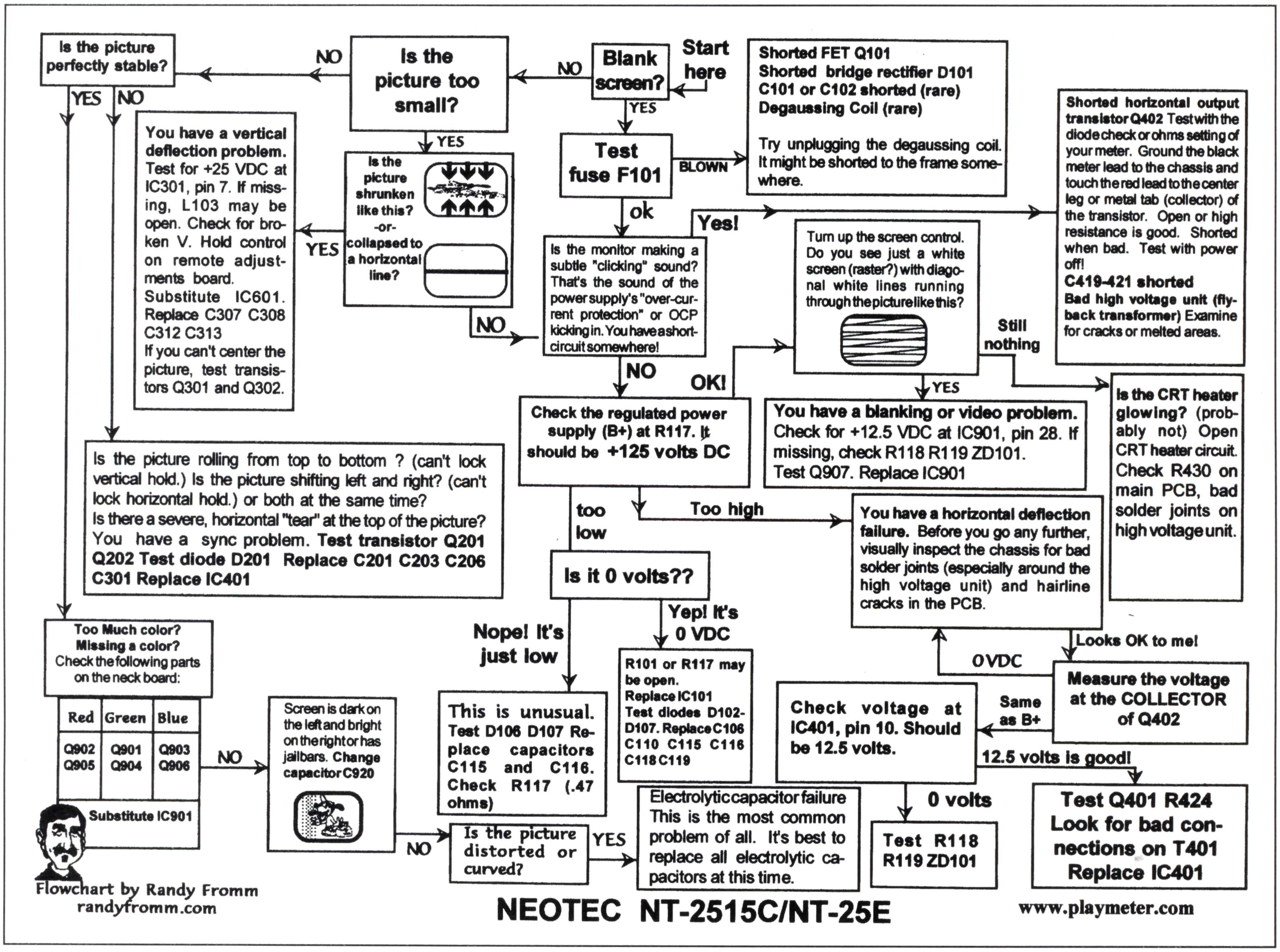
> **"BUT WHEN YOU TAKE YOUR FIRST LOOK AT SOMETHING THAT'S NEW, BUT COMPLETELY FAMILIAR, YOU IMMEDIATELY FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE AND CAN GET RIGHT DOWN TO TROUBLESHOOTING."**

Solid tantalum capacitors have lower ESR. In general, the 100 kHz ESR values of aluminum capacitors are about an order of magnitude higher than the ESR of tantalum capacitors for the same capacitance/voltage values. Tantalum capacitor ESR is also more stable, showing no significant degradation over life.

Solid tantalum capacitors have better temperature characteristics. TCC for tantalum capacitors is +12/-10% from +125∞C/-55. TCC for a typical aluminum capacitor is +20/-50% from +105 degrees C/-40 degrees C.

Solid tantalum capacitors are easily surface mounted. Tantalum capacitors have excellent capability for surface-mount processing. They can be top-side reflow soldered using IR, VPR, etc., and can also be bottom-side wave soldered. Most aluminum capacitors are still used in through-hole configurations. Although there are surface-mount types available, they cannot be bottom-side assembled with wave solder. Also, although they may be reflow soldered, they only tolerate fairly benign conditions. The large size of the aluminum capacitors may present difficulty with certain types of pick-and-place equipment. The use of leaded types on an otherwise surface-mount board obviously requires manual assembly and soldering.

Solid tantalum capacitors do not exhibit dielectric deformation. During long-term unbiased storage, the alu-


Start here
Blank screen?
NO
YES
Is the picture too small?
NO
YES
Is the picture perfectly stable?
YES
NO
Is the picture shrunken like this? -or- collapsed to a horizontal line?
YES
NO
You have a vertical deflection problem. Test for +25 VDC at IC301, pin 7. If missing, L103 may be open. Check for broken V. Hold control on remote adjustments board. Substitute IC601. Replace C307 C308 C312 C313 If you can't center the picture, test transistors Q301 and Q302.
Test fuse F101
BLOWN
Shorted FET Q101 Shorted bridge rectifier D101 C101 or C102 shorted (rare) Degaussing Coil (rare) Try unplugging the degaussing coil. It might be shorted to the frame somewhere.
ok
Is the monitor making a subtle "clicking" sound? That's the sound of the power supply's "over-current protection" or OCP kicking in. You have a short-circuit somewhere!
Yes!
Shorted horizontal output transistor Q402 Test with the diode check or ohms setting of your meter. Ground the black meter lead to the chassis and touch the red lead to the center leg or metal tab (collector) of the transistor. Open or high resistance is good. Shorted when bad. Test with power off! C419-421 shorted Bad high voltage unit (flyback transformer) Examine for cracks or melted areas.
NO
OK!
Turn up the screen control. Do you see just a white screen (raster?) with diagonal white lines running through the picture like this?
Still nothing
YES
Is the CRT heater glowing? (probably not) Open CRT heater circuit. Check R430 on main PCB, bad solder joints on high voltage unit.
You have a blanking or video problem. Check for +12.5 VDC at IC901, pin 28. If missing, check R118 R119 ZD101. Test Q907. Replace IC901
Check the regulated power supply (B+) at R117. It should be +125 volts DC
Too high
too low
You have a horizontal deflection failure. Before you go any further, visually inspect the chassis for bad solder joints (especially around the high voltage unit) and hairline cracks in the PCB.
Looks OK to me!
Measure the voltage at the COLLECTOR of Q402
0VDC
Same as B+
Check voltage at IC401, pin 10. Should be 12.5 volts.
12.5 volts is good!
Test Q401 R424 Look for bad connections on T401 Replace IC401
0 volts
Test R118 R119 ZD101
Is it 0 volts??
Yep! It's 0 VDC
R101 or R117 may be open. Replace IC101 Test diodes D102-D107. Replace C106 C110 C115 C116 C118 C119
Nope! It's just low
This is unusual. Test D106 D107 Replace capacitors C115 and C116. Check R117 (.47 ohms)
Is the picture rolling from top to bottom ? (can't lock vertical hold.) Is the picture shifting left and right? (can't lock horizontal hold.) or both at the same time? Is there a severe, horizontal "tear" at the top of the picture? You have a sync problem. Test transistor Q201 Q202 Test diode D201 Replace C201 C203 C206 C301 Replace IC401
Too Much color? Missing a color? Check the following parts on the neck board:
Red: Q902 Q905
Green: Q901 Q904
Blue: Q903 Q906
Substitute IC901
NO
Screen is dark on the left and bright on the right or has jailbars. Change capacitor C920
NO
Is the picture distorted or curved?
YES
Electrolytic capacitor failure This is the most common problem of all. It's best to replace all electrolytic capacitors at this time.
Flowchart by Randy Fromm randyfromm.com
NEOTEC NT-2515C/NT-25E
www.playmeter.com

> "IF YOU'RE SEEING SOME-THING FOR THE FIRST TIME AND IT'S BROKE, YOU HAVE TO FIGURE OUT HOW IT'S SUPPOSED TO WORK BEFORE YOU CAN FIX IT."

minum capacitor dielectric "deforms." The parts must then be reformed by application of steady-state DC Voltage to reestablish the dielectric layer integrity. Solid tantalum capacitors do not exhibit this phenomenon and may be stored indefinitely without voltage applied.

Most people don't stock 'em. I don't. I fix lotsa monitors. 'Nuff said?

Author's Note: *I have planned an Arcade School in Chicago for the week of Nov. 3-6. Contact me for details. Also, I have two exciting new ways to buy and sell games on the Internet. Join the BuyStuff@randyfromm.com network. It's absolutely free and will put you in touch via e-mail with people looking for games and equipment all over the world.*

Also, I have been asked by the AMOA to host a special technical presentation at the AMOA show in October. It's called the Technician's Obstacle Course and will include technical presentations from manufacturers on jukeboxes, pinball, ticket dispensers, redemption games, monitors, and more.

There will also be lots of hands-on, touchy-feely type stuff, including a chance to use a deluxe suite of Sencore test equipment worth around $10,000! All attendees will receive valuable technician's reference and troubleshooting guides worth at least $49.95, absolutely free. You'll even get a chance to win a brand new Fluke digital multimeter, courtesy of PartStar. Best of all, there's no extra charge for attending. It's all included with your admission to the AMOA show.

See you at the Arcade School! ▲

For more information on all this stuff, contact me at 1944 Falmouth Drive, El Cajon, CA 92020-2827; (619)593-6131; fax.(619)593-6132; e-mail (randy@randyfromm. com) or Web site (http://randyfromm.com).

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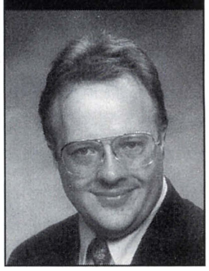

“Ticket” Vic Fortenbach

GAME ATTENDANTS *and* CUSTOMER SERVICE

The two groups mentioned in the title of this article should be synonymous. Game attendants give customer service and customer service is what keeps you in business. Customer service in a family entertainment center can mean different things to different people. For instance, to some it could mean something as simple as asking the customer if he's having fun or watching a game to make sure it works properly.

John Krulisky of the FunArcade in Covington, La., is there to help customers and oversee the game room operation.

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Yet in so many situations, even the simple expectations are not that simple. At the very least you expect to find game attendants walking the floor. Not so in one particular FEC I visited. The attendants were nowhere to be found, unless you looked in the back office. Wow! It must have been a party back there with food, cups, and good times, all at the expense of your customers. Even if your games are working 100 percent having an attendant present on the game floor is reassuring to the customers.

When a customer has a problem with a game, the “image” of that problem is marked in their mind. Your task as an FEC manager is to keep that small bad experience from spreading and getting worse. The more the customer has to do to “fix” the problem, the worse the problem will get. If not settled quickly, some small problems blow up into big or multiple problems. For example, a customer loses money in a game. That's the immediate problem. If there is no attendant to help, or if that attendant is rude, then there's another problem. Now the customer's perception of your FEC is much worse than it was. By handling small problems, for instance, this customer's lost coin, quickly and courteously, the customer's perception of your FEC is elevated a few notches. He'll tell his friends, “You know those people at the FEC are certainly nice.”

How many times a day do you think a game malfunctions and the customer doesn't report it? If you guessed 10, 20, or even 30 times, I'd say you underestimated. In a busy game center on a busy day, I would bet it occurs 50 or more times. Realistically, you can't fix every problem as it happens, but you can limit the harm by having an alert game attendant staff. Here's a typical scenario when a game malfunctions. The customer usually hits the coin door or pushes the coin return button several times. If the coin is not returned or the tickets are not dispensed, the customer marches over to the redemption prize area to voice concern, but he may just walk away, never to play that game again. An alert game attendant would notice the customer having a problem and quickly and courteously accommodate him by refunding the lost coin or tickets, or repairing the game right then and there.

One thing I have noticed, the malfunctioning game will always work when the game attendant inserts a coin just like your car always purrs like a kitten when you're trying to explain to the mechanic that it sounds like it's got rocks in the engine. This brings up another point: no one likes to be made to look like a fool. But that's just what your customer will feel like when a game attendant walks over to the game, inserts a coin, and the game works. Now the customer is feeling low

"Even if your games are working 100 percent having an attendant present on the game floor is reassuring to the customers."

and the attendant must be able to assure the customer that it wasn't his fault. Instead of dealing with the machine in front of the customer, if at all possible, give a coin to the customer and encourage him to play another game. After the customer has left the area, the attendant can then insert a coin to see what's wrong.

Another way to provide great customer service on the game floor is to keep as much information as possible about the games, especially the problem ones. A customer may not know all the technical terms for a game's problem, but if records have been kept, one look at the log book will show that there have been similar complaints and the problem should be noted along with how it was fixed. Having that information is a big help when repairing a game. If the attendant on duty is unable to repair the game, make sure he makes an entry in the log book Then the game tech has the needed information to repair the game. This log book can also serve as a record of game problems, especially if a game is constantly having the same problem. You can tell by looking back in the log book whether a problem may not be so easy to fix!

Training your game attendants is vital in providing great customer service. Too often a game attendant, with no customer skills and no training, is put on the front line shortly after being hired. Take my word for it, this is not a wise move. There are too many things he must know about dealing with your customers before being placed in the position.

Two examples of things that must be taught to your attendants: never argue with a customer, and the customer is always right. No matter that they may often believe quite the opposite. If your game attendants have a problem with a customer's attitude, they should refer the problem to the supervisor. They must know when they should step back from a problem and not make it worse by trying to handle it on their own. Your training will set parameters for them and make it clear what you expect. A family entertainment center is just that...family entertainment. ▲

If you have any questions on this or any other article, I can be reached at my Web site (http://members.aol.com/ticketvic) or by phone at VICCO Electronics (760)322-4000.

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VALLEY FOOSBALL championships celebrate first year in Oshkosh

Enthusiasm abounded at the first annual VIFA championships in Oshkosh, Wis.

Starbuck's Stars won the Mixed Team Division, (l-r): VIFA's Gregg Elliott, Evan Stachelek, Marsha Pendley, Chuck Pistole, tournament director Link Pendley, and Valley's Dave Courington.

The first annual Valley International Foosball Association (VIFA) Championships held this summer in Oshkosh, Wis., marked the beginning of a foosball era with league players travelling from across the United States and Canada to make their mark on foosball history.

As soon as the 75 freshly built Valley Tornado Foosball tables were set on the convention floor, competitors enjoyed a wildly entertaining kickoff party that included the music of The Temperaments and a Draw Your Partner mini tournament. VIFA executive director Gregg Elliott and Valley vice president of sales Dave Courington also gave away a new Valley Tornado home table to Randy VanOss of Wisconsin as part of a special event drawing.

With hopes of taking home an international title as well as a share of the $26,300 purse ($15,000 added by Valley Recreation Products), players competed in the following five divisions: Full Team (four player); Mixed Team (three player); Regular Doubles; Men's Singles; and Women's Singles.

The first day of action got started with VIFA's inaugural Referee Training and Instructional School. The two-hour session was conducted by Courington and touring professional Evan Stachelek of San Diego, Calif. With an intent group of players and league coordinators in attendance, the school evolved into an outpouring of helpful league knowledge and interesting conversation.

On the following day, VIFA charter holders took a break to gather for a relaxing yet informative league round table discussion where they were able to discuss their thoughts and raise questions with league directors Gregg and Brian Elliott as well as Valley's Courington, Link Pendley, Jim Hall, and Jerry Dunbar.

Charter holders represented included: American Leasing (Florida); CM Distributor (Kansas); Gem Music & Vending (Ohio), Midstate Amusement (Wisconsin); Southwest Tornado (Oklahoma); Table Soccer Northwest (Washington); Black Hills Novelty (South Dakota); Eagle Amusement (Wisconsin); Indy Amusement (Indiana); Regent Vending (Canada); and Table Soccer Ltd. (California).

The team competition was captured on video tape for posterity by Inside Foos with professional fooscaster Jim Stevens and professional Christina Fuchs calling the action, along with help from Elliott and Stachelek.

With each of the divisions decided, a Sunday brunch was held to recognize the new title holders as well as the charter holders and members of the tournament committee. The committee consisted of: Valley tournament director Link Pendley; Courington; Gregg and Brian Elliott; charter holder Mike Simmons, and statistician Ben Kennon.

Courington also accepted an appreciation award from VIFA, and Valley gave away another Valley Tornado home table to Heath Hoeppner, a native of Oshkosh. Closing out the event was entertainment from Chicago comedian and magician Ken Mate.

Here's a look at the final results:

Full Team Division: 1st—Table Soccer Ltd. of Table Soccer Ltd. ($2,000); 2nd—Amedio's Heros of Midstate Amusement ($1,500); 3rd—Team Shepherd of CM Distributors ($1,100).

Mixed Team Division: 1st—Starbuck's Stars of Southwest Tornado ($1,400); 2nd—Seattle Grunge Foosers of Table Soccer Northwest ($900); 3rd—Amedio's Team of Midstate Amusement ($550).

Regular Doubles Division: 1st—Skinner/Stewart of Table Soccer Ltd. ($1,300); 2nd—Randall/Anderson of Eagle Amusement ($900); 3rd—Heath & Peach of Midstate and Starbuck's Stars of Southwest Tornado ($600).

Men's Singles Divsion: 1st—Ron Greenwald of Midstate Amusement ($650); 2nd—Bobby Diaz of American Leasing ($450); 3rd—Pat Wrochta and Amedio Gilmore, both of Midstate Amusement ($300).

Women's Singles: 1st—Tammy Alberts of Midstate Amusement ($450); 2nd—Stephanie Amerson of Midstate Amusement ($250). ▲

SPORTING
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INCREDIBLE TECHNOLOGIES hosts golf and bowling TOURNAMENTS

Incredible Technologies recently announced the completion of two nationally networked tournaments. The first, Pop's Pins, was held on the company's video *World Class Bowling*, while the second, July 4-Some, saw players compete on *Golden Tee 3D Golf.*

National winners in Pop's Pins were first place winner Jeff English of Lansing, Ill., who took away $1,000 in prize money; second place finisher Michael Kitzmiller of Salem, Ore., who won $600; and third place competitor E. M. Hochstatter of Omaha, Neb., who garnered $500. Winners at the local level won prizes ranging from $30 to $150.

Winners in the *Golden Tee 3D Golf* event were awarded prizes at the national, division, and local level. Here's a look at the final results:

National: 1st—Chris Guynn of Christianburg, Va., ($2,500); 2nd—Ryan Bourgeois of Houston, Texas, ($2,000); 3rd—Steven Sobe of Mt. Airy, N.C., ($1,500).

Illinois Division: 1st—Alex Hernandez of Bridgeview ($500); 2nd—B. Panagiotopoulos of Countryside ($400); 3rd—Tim Scott of Glenn Carson ($300).

Nebraska Division: 1st—Thomas Nolan of Fremont; 2nd—Travis Strayer of Omaha; 3rd—Jason Schleimer of Omaha.

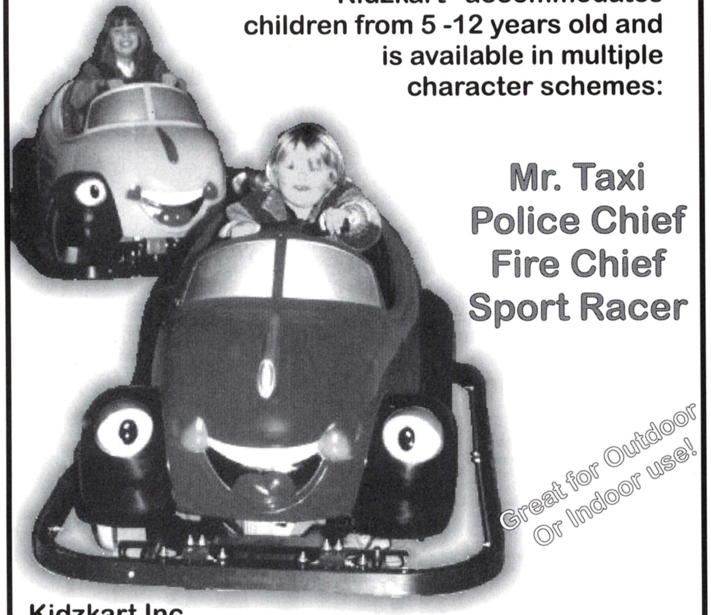
Central Division: 1st—D. Parish of Houston, Texas; 2nd—Scott Gibson of Dallas, Texas; 3rd—W.T. Gardenhire of Houston, Texas.

Northeastern Division: 1st—Alo of Huntington Valley, Pa.; 2nd—D. J. Urban of Akron, Ohio; 3rd—Mike Sima of Columbus, Ohio.

Southeastern Division: 1st—Jeff Joyce of Mt. Airy, N.C.; 2nd—Adam M.C. of Mt. Airy, N.C.; 3rd—Kamran Ashraf of Chattanooga, Tenn.

Western Division: 1st—Don Moore of Spokane, Wash.; 2nd—Ryan Fong of Honolulu, Hawaii; 3rd—Daniel Madden of Springfield, Ore.

For more information on networked *Golden Tee 3D Golf* or *World Class Bowling* or its International Tournament System, contact Incredible Technologies, (847)870-7027. ▲



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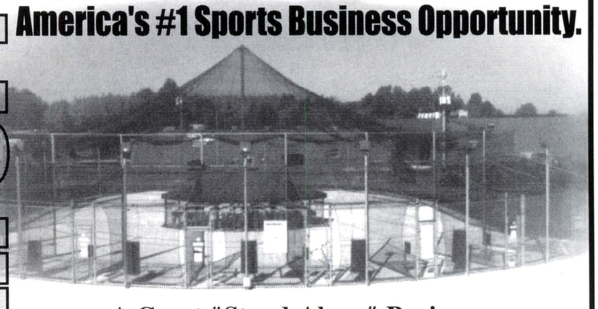

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ABC

Springfield regional concludes
'97 Valley Gold tour events

Valley Recreation Products completed its sixth and final Valley Gold regional tour event with a final stop in Springfield, Ill., at the Prairie Capital Convention Center. Winners then moved on to the $150,000 North American Championships held this summer in Minneapolis, Minn., at the Hyatt Regency on Nicollet Mall.

Dart players converged on Springfield to toss for $20,000 in cash prizes and a spot in the finals, which will feature among other prizes a 1997 Harley-Davidson Custom Sportster. While regional competitors were tossing for the top 32 spots in the Team USA and Go for the Gold events at the championships, non-qualified players were eligible to participate in all Open events.

Highlights at the Springfield event included a $5,000 toss in which players lined up for the chance to throw three darts at the red bull's-eye for the prize money. The top 16 players took it down to the wire in a winner-take-all shoot-out.

For more information on the $250,000 Valley Gold tour, contact Valley at (888)868-7465. Here's a look at the final results from the Springfield event:

Go for the Gold: 1st—Randy Featherson; 2nd—Ray Terronez; 3rd—Larry Schramm.

Women's USA: 1st—Mary Thatcher; 2nd—Ellen Rice; 3rd—Kathy Howard.

Open Singles: 1st—Ralph Simmerman; 2nd—Tim Tegel; 3rd—Todd Kurtz.

Open Doubles: 1st—Bennet and Dodge; 2nd—Naert and Jimener; 3rd—Raymer and Matthews.

Men's USA: 1st—Steve Zunker; 2nd—Jimmy Damore; 3rd—Brian Pfeffer.

Luck-of-the-Draw: 1st—Carpenter and Salazar; 2nd—Newell and Nehls; 3rd—Bucceri and Blume.

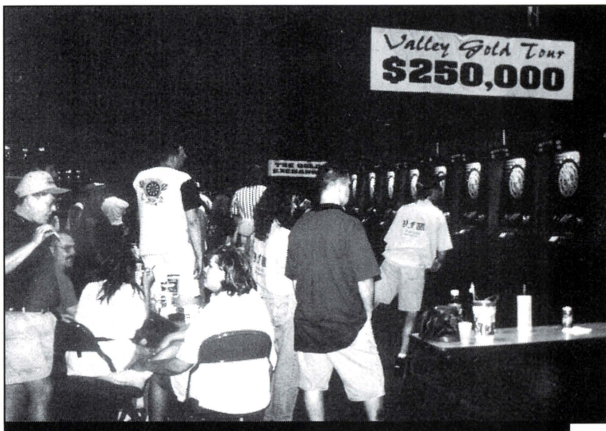
Women's Singles: 1st—Sharon Sonntag; 2nd—Mary Thatcher; 3rd—Kim Bawulski.

Women's Doubles: 1st—Spears and Gutierrez; 2nd—Baringer and Keller; 3rd—Thatcher and Werner.

Non-Pro Doubles: 1st—Sankot and Nagel; 2nd—O'Connell and Brumlee; 3rd—Featherson and Sollars.

Non-Pro Singles: 1st—Gregg Fountaine; 2nd—Randy Featherson; 3rd—Chris Bucceri.

Mixed Triples: 1st—Robert Weisz, Rick Browning, and Jana Baringer; 2nd—Tom Brooks, Doug Griffith, and Roxanna Spears; 3rd—Ray Bennet, Kerry Dodge, and Becky Werner. ▲



Players lined up for a special $5,000 winner-take-all toss at the Valley regional in Springfield, Ill.

Just the Hard Technical Facts!
Randy Fromm
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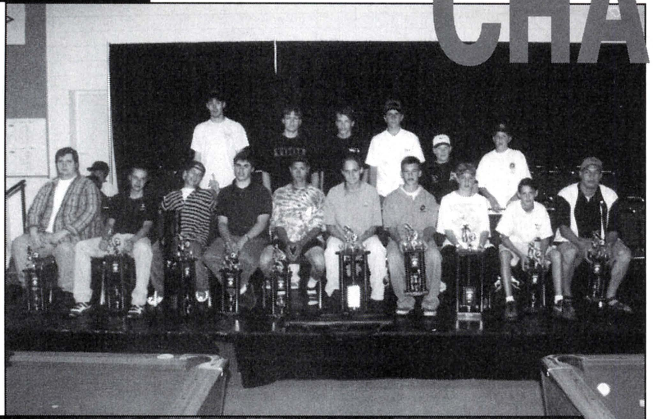

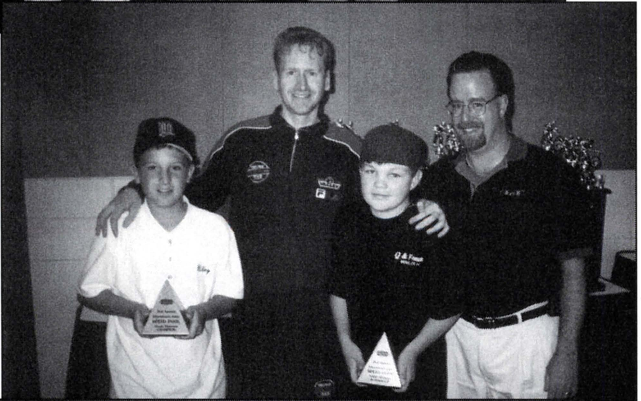

The 7th Annual Valley International 8-Ball Association International Junior Championships, held over the summer in Sioux City, Iowa, drew more than 420 singles entries and an incredible 135 three-person teams representing close to 30 different charter holder operating companies.

Players competed on 80 Valley Cougar pool tables for international recognition along with trophies, prizes, and U.S. Savings Bonds. Huebler Industries donated 36 engraved Huebler cues to the top finishers in each division along with hard cases for competitors placing 5-6th and 7-8th.

"The junior program continues to grow by leaps and bounds and we are committed to ensuring the program's success into the future," commented VNEA executive director Gregg Elliott. "We even added a sacred section to the room called The Pocket where the finals of each bracket were played out."

Play led off with singles competitions, and competitors who did not place in the events were treated to a mini-singles tournament. Prizes for the mini-singles tournament included Huebler cues, McDermott cues, Mali cues, and New Images cue cases.

As a special treat throughout the week-long event, Jerry Briesath, academic dean of the Pool School, gave instruction and individual attention to the young players. Speed pool expert David Pearson was also on hand to dazzle the youth with his lightning quick table runs, offering a $1,000 challenge to anyone who could beat his record time of 26-1/2 seconds. Adding additional spice to the tournament was the 2nd Annual VNEA International Junior Speed Pool

FROM TOP:
The singles competition winners.

The Cowboys were named one of the two best dressed teams.

From left: Speed Pool winner Riley Pugh, world speed pool champion Dave Pearson, runner-up B. J. March, and Greg O'Connor of Mali Cues.

VNEA executive director Gregg Elliott (l) with several sponsors and charter holders, (l-r): Greg O'Connor of Mali Cues, Paul Huebler of Huebler Industries, Cheri and Bob Lund of River City Amusement, and tournament director Craig Dumdei of C & N Sales.

Championships. Winners were Riley Pugh of Manford Music & Vending in Huron, S.D., (Youth Division); Andrew Schiestel of Western Automatic Amusement in Ontario, Canada, (Minors Division); and Ruben Kubista of D & R/Star in Rochester, Minn., (Majors Division).

VNEA's final pool treat was Dr. Cue Tom Rossman who displayed his Artistic Pool Challenges and cheerleading players competing in the 2nd Annual VNEA International Junior Artistic Pool Championships. Winners were Beau Runningen of United Music in Fargo, N.D., (Youth); Jerrod Bernath of United Music (Minors); and Matt Benton of D & R/Star in Faribault, Minn.

The team event kicked off with a parade of flags and 13 select players marching to the sounds of "Let's Get Ready to Rumble" along with VNEA mascot Charlie Cougar. On hand for the event were Elliott, Paul Huebler of Huebler Industries, assistant VNEA executive director Brian Elliott, tournament director Craig Dumdei of C & N Sales in Mankato, Minn., and VNEA junior tournament committee members Bill Lane, Linnea Rowley, and Bert Olson.

Special events taking place throughout the doubles competition included a Speed Break challenge, which was measured by a dual lasered speed meter from Guido Orlandi Custom Cues, and an Adult/Junior Scotch Doubles competition. Winners in the Speed Break event took home a tube-like New Image cue case and a Mali cue donated by Mali Cues. The winners included: Kris Radley of River City Amusement in Sioux City (Youth); Dustin Sheedy of D & R/Star in Rochester, Minn., (Minors); and Matt Drecker of United Music in Fargo, N.D., (Majors).

At the conclusion of the competition, which saw the final matches

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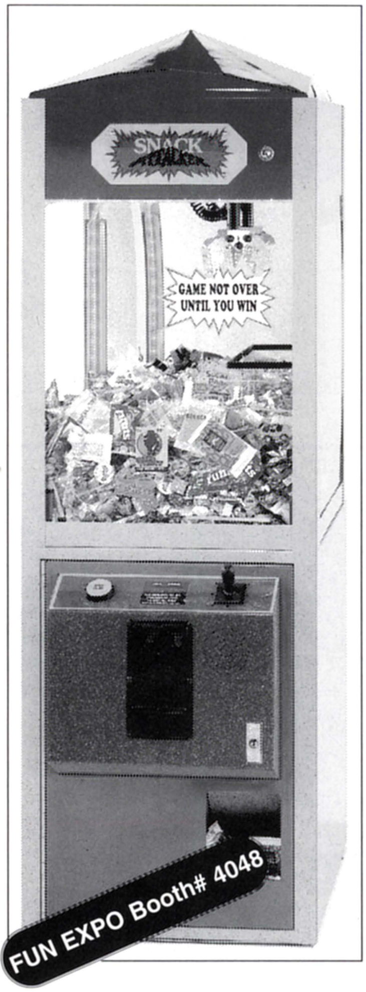

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broadcast by professional poolcaster Jim Stevens of San Diego, Calif., VNEA extended its thanks to all the players as well as event sponsors: Valley Recreation Products, Huebler Industries, C & N Sales, River City Amusement, Viking Cues, Mali Cues, Falcon Cues, New Image, L.E.A.N.I., Predator, McDermott Cues, Paragon Cues, and Exclusively Billiards.

Here's a look at the final results:

Team (Youth): 1st—Manford's Screwballs of Manford Music in Huron, S.D.; 2nd—Shar's #3 of D & R/Star in Rochester, Minn.; 3rd—8-Ball Express of Automatic Vendors in Pierre, S.D.

Team (Minors): 1st—Q & Feather Ducks of River City Amusement in Sioux City, Iowa; 2nd—Young Guns of Western Automatic Amusement in Ontario, Canada; 3rd—Who's Next of Automatic Vendors..

Team (Majors): 1st—Billiards on Broadway of United Music in Fargo, N.D.; 2nd—Natural Born Killers of Western Automatic Amusement; 3rd—Q & Feather Condors of River City Amusement in Sioux City, Iowa.

Singles (Youth): 1st—Chad Nelson of D & R/Star; 2nd—Brandon March of River City Amusement; 3rd—Chad Lund of Madison Coin Machine in Monona, Wis.

Singles (Minors): 1st—John Zender of C & N Sales in Mankato, Minn.; 2nd—Darcy McGinley of Western Automatic Amusement; 3rd—Bryan Fisher of C & N Sales.

Singles (Majors): 1st—Tony Merksick of N.T.S. in Omaha, Neb.; 2nd—Jamie Nichols of Stansfield Vending in LaCross, Wis.; 3rd—Jarrold Harris of Cheyenne Music & Vending in Cheyenne, Wyo.

Adult/Junior Scotch Doubles (Youth): 1st—Dana and Rick Tonjum of Rochester, Minn; 2nd—Beau and Tom Runningen of Fargo, N.D.

Adult/Junior Scotch Doubles (Minors): 1st—Jerrod Bernath and Marc Oelslager of Fargo, N.D.; 2nd—Dustin and Pat Sheedy of Rochester, Minn.

Adult/Junior Scotch Doubles (Majors): 1st—Jeremy and Larry Peck of Rochester, Minn.; 2nd—Jesse McGinty and Ron Denney of Sioux City, Iowa.

Hardluck Division (Youth): 1st—Cowboys of Automatic Vendors; 2nd—Q & Feather Owls of River City Amusement.

Hardluck Division (Minors): 1st—Vanishing Point of Game Farm Amusement in Circle Pines, Minn.; 2nd—Owatonna Winning Streak of D & R/Star.

Hardluck Division (Majors): 1st—Williams Enterprises of Williams Enterprises in Carmi, Ill.; 2nd—User Friendly of United Music Co.

Team Uniforms: Cowboys of Automatic Vendors and Cline, Roth & Simmons of D & R/Star. ▲

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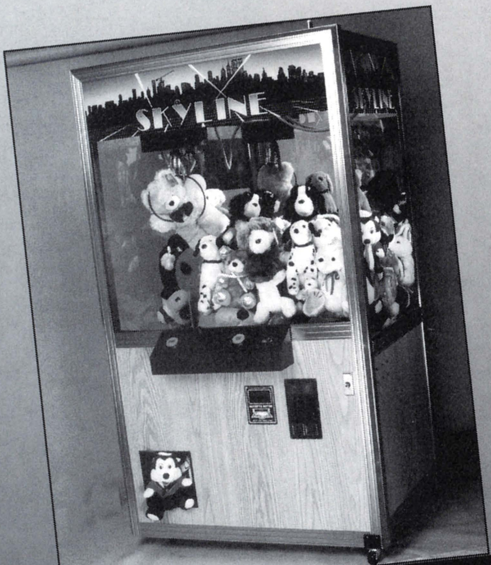

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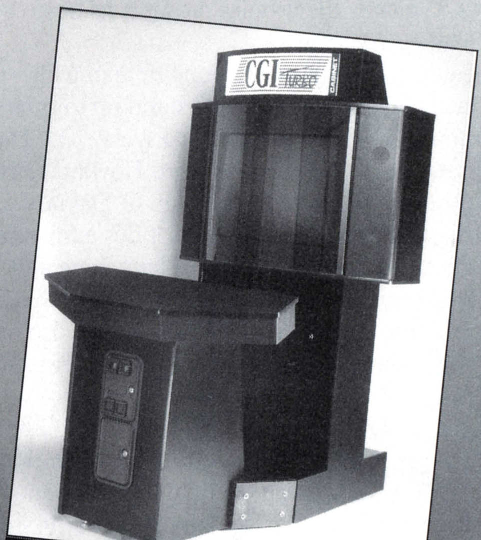

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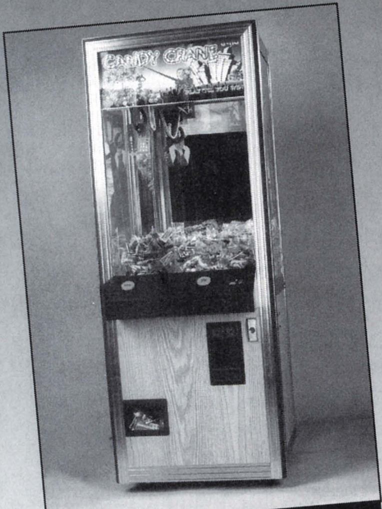
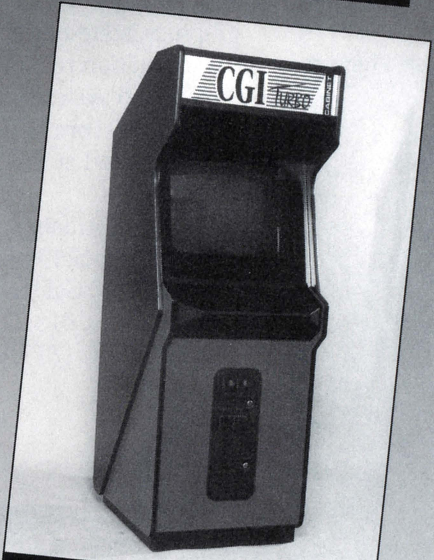


CANDY CRANE



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WHAT'S NEW

Continuing its tradition of incorporating solid game play with attention-grabbing effects and straightforward objectives, Williams Electronics presents its newest pinball release *Medieval Madness.*

The game's setting is a bygone time in which players must face many challenges and stand up to such malevolent kingsmen as The Earl of Ego, Sir Psycho, The Duke of Bourbon, Francois De Grimm, and Lord Howard Kurtz, all of whom collectively rule over a reign of "payne."

Medieval Madness' playfield includes a full-scale articulated castle and moat, a catapult for launching attacks, a jousting contest, and the magical intervention of Merlin who restores order to all the madness. The game also takes full advantage of its theme with some subtle twists and a wry humor.

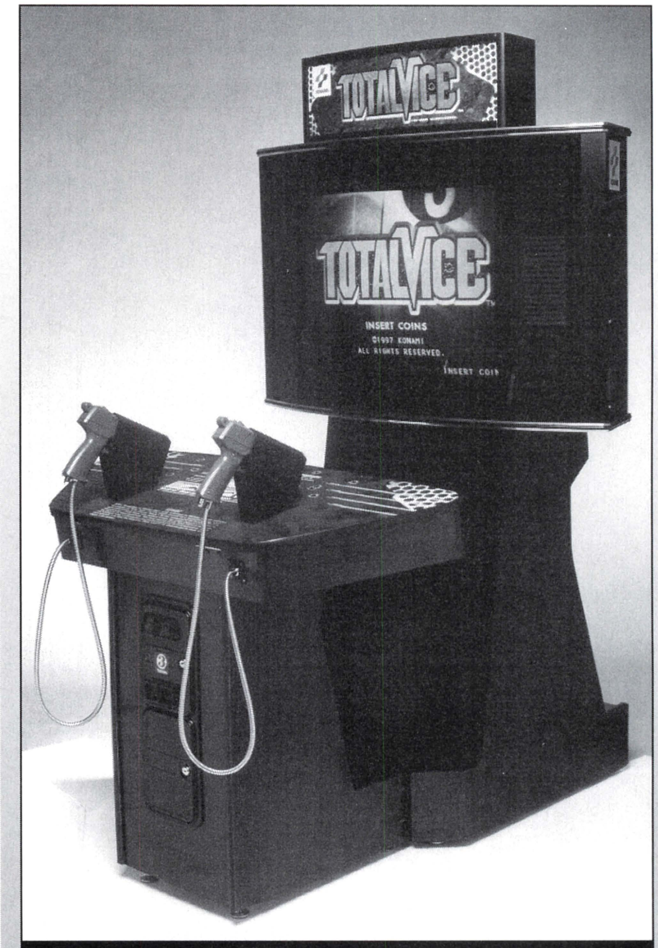
Players will discover a wealth of dynamic, interactive playfield features such as the castle with its drawbridge and gate that need to be hit, lowered, and opened for entry into the castle itself and the resulting demolition of the structure with light and sound effects. Other play features include Multi-Ball Madness and jackpot, double jackpot, and super jackpot.

The game comes as a total package with eye-catching graphics, state-of-the-art dot matrix animation technology, and a DCS sound system with an original musical score and custom speech created at the Williams studio.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Williams Electronics, 3401 N. California Ave., Chicago, IL 60618; (773)961-1000; fax (773)961-1060.

Medieval Madness
Williams
Ye Olde Medieval Madness

MEDIEVAL MADNESS



TOTAL VICE

Konami announces the release of its explosive new gun game, *Total Vice*, a two-player upright video that is jam packed with challenging action. Players participate in a special task force armed to seek out and destroy an international terrorist group.

The game offers four missions including Target Practice for the beginner, Arms Smuggling in Miami, Biker Gang activity in the city, and Covert Terrorist operations in New York. Action takes place through many exciting backgrounds including city streets, subways, office buildings, and harbors.

Five different types of guns can be used: rifle, dual, magnum, shotgun, and machine gun. *Total Vice's* high profile cabinet has a 33" mid-resolution monitor which puts the player right into the action. The game is equipped with an innovative live-action speaker sound system enclosed in each gun. Also featured are adjustable violence settings and a completely modular cabinet for easy handling and assembly.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Konami, 900 Deerfield Parkway, Buffalo Grove, IL 60089; (847)215-5100; fax (847)215-5122; Web site (http://www.konami.com).

Digital Tech Frontier presents its unattended 3-D sight, sound, and smell virtual reality kiosk, Virtual Scentsations. Players can experience the exhilaration of hang gliding in picturesque canyons, scuba diving with dolphins, time traveling to ancient Egypt, and even Indy car racing.

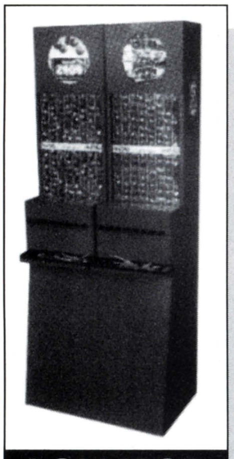
SCENTSATIONS
VIRTUAL
VIRTUAL

VIRTUAL SCENTSATIONS

Each kiosk offers a selection of three different virtual experiences that stimulate visual, aural, and even olfactory senses by delivering localized fragrances near the users nose. Immersants will see stereoscopic 3-D images pop off the screen, listen to their environment in surround sound, and actually smell the aromas of fresh pine trees and mountain air as they fly through the landscapes. Even the fiery torches in the pyramids and the burning rubber of the race cars can be smelled inside these worlds.

Occupying a mere 28" x 34" x 60" space, the unit is a fully self-sufficient and unattended machine. Features include a bill acceptor, full color external monitor, three lighted selection buttons, and a personal head-mounted display (HMD) attached to a sturdy, articulated arm. The HMD provides a full stereoscopic viewing environment and a fully unrestricted range of head movement.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Digital Tech Frontier, 6700 West Chicago, Suite 1, Chandler, AZ 85226; (800)215-4658; fax (602)961-9656; Web site (http://www.hightechentertainment.com).



LOLLIPOP VENDOR

Vend-A-Pop Mfg. offers its line of cartridge loading, lollipop vending machines which can be loaded from empty to full in less than a minute. The unit comes in one, two, and three column models.

Features include front loading with the ability to turn 180 degrees, capacity of 200 Bubble or 240 Tootsie pops, all steel construction, unbreakable Lexan front panel, pop holding cartridges in a reusable carrying case, foreign currency adaptability, and a factory warranty.

A paper bypass mechanism also beats vandalism 99 percent of the time. Dimensions are 38" high x 13" wide x 15" deep.

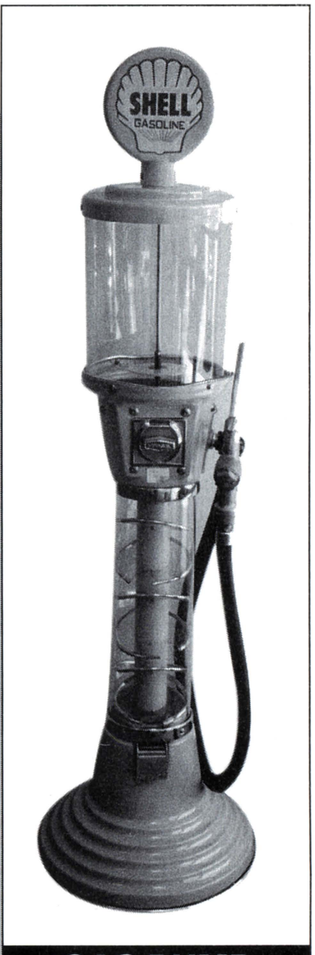
For more information, or distributor referral, contact Vend-A-Pop Mfg., P.O. Box 150595, Brooklyn, NY 11215; (718)596-1700 or (800)799-9956; fax (718)596-1700; Web site (http://shell.idt.net/~vendapop).

West Coast Mfg. presents a new series of bulk vendors capitalizing on the nostalgia of old-fashioned gas pumps combined with the newest in gum and capsule dispensing attractions.

The unit comes in three models each with a different interior vending mechanism: disc, disc with internal colored bubbles, and the lightning bolt design. The first two can vend capsules, gumballs, and other round objects. The third will also handle odd shaped items.

West Coast offers single or dual product vendors, the latter offering two Beaver coin mechs and a divided product globe. Dimensions are 80" high and 23" in diameter at the base.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact West Coast Mfg., 6601 Lyons Road, Suite D-2, Coconut Creek, FL 33073; (954)725-8314 or (800)240-5256; fax (954)725-8414.



GAS PUMP VENDORS

Gaelco presents *Surf Planet*, the fast-action video inspired by snowboarding in which players compete with one another in their descent down various mountains. The game offers players four different settings each with its own level of difficulty: easy, medium, expert, and last stage.

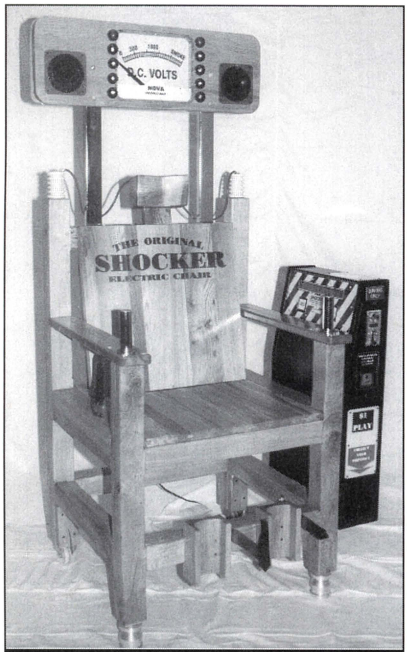
A player can only access the last stage once they have succeeded in the previous three stages. An important new feature of the game is the possibility of registering two records—one for time and one for jump distance. Winners will get a chance to enter their names on a special Web page.

SURF PLANET
gaelco

SURF PLANET

Surf Planet's cabinet has a special analogue joystick control. In addition, it is possible to link two machines so that players can compete simultaneously.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Gaelco, Escipion, 9-11, Barcelona, Spain 08023; 417 36 26; fax 417 28 02.



SHOCKER

Bromley introduces its two newest games: the novelty game *Shocker* and the race theme redemption piece *Thunder Run.*

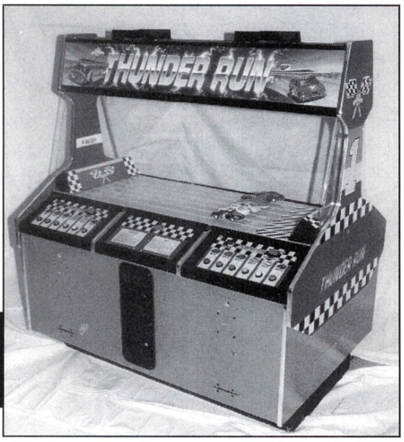
Shocker puts players into a mock-style electric chair where they hold onto right- and left-hand grips. The longer the player holds the grips, the stronger the vibration is felt. A DC volt-style meter above the player's chair gauges the strength of the vibration the player is feeling.

If the player can hold on long enough, smoke emits from the chair, and at the end of the experience a ticket reader prints out the voltage sustained by the player and/or a ticket value for machines used in a redemption operation. Coinage, strength of vibration, smoke, and ticket value are all operator-adjustable.

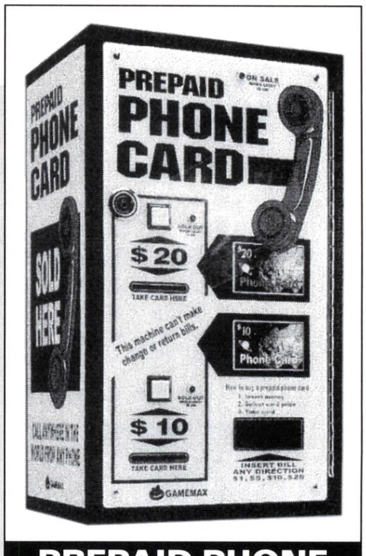
Thunder Run is a joint project between Bromley and Sega SA. Game play is based on NASCAR racing. Players select one to six cars, hit their nitro buttons, and launch the vehicles off the starting line.

The winning player can win up to 1,000 tickets, and guaranteed skill tickets are offered with every play. The number of tickets dispensed is operator-adjustable, and race competition is highlighted by continuous music and flashing lights.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Bromley Inc., 6 Bridlewood Road, Northbrook, IL 60062; (847)509-0240; fax (847)509-0242; Web site (http://www.segasa.com)



THUNDER RUN



PREPAID PHONE CARD MACHINE

Gamemax Corp. introduces its new prepaid phone card machine, which uses the company's bill validator with stacker, is installed with a patented device to prevent vandalism and theft of cards, has an automatic backup recharging system to prevent blackouts, and is easy to use in different types of locations.

The machine takes $1, $5, $10, and $20, and weighs 45 pounds. Three different size cards are available with two of those included in the machine's factory setup. The third can be vended by obtaining a new dispenser. The unit can be attached to the wall or secured on a stand.

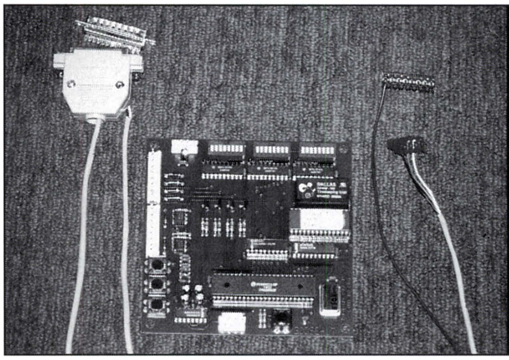
For more information, or distributor referral, contact Gamemax, 316 Paseo Tesoro, Walnut, CA 91789; (909)598-3089; fax (909)598-7362; Web site (http://www.gamemaxusa.com).

Really Killer Systems presents the Goose-It printer controller board, which has been designed from the ground up to act as a reliable and flexible voucher printer as well as a complete bookkeeping center.

Printer features such as double size and/or red characters are used to make copycat printing more difficult when the selected printer supports them. Each unit also has a unique serial number, a custom message can be entered, and the date and time can be printed on every voucher.

All major functions and settings can be done with the DIP switches or the on-board push buttons, and a cable is supplied to connect the board to a PC or terminal for all of the advanced functions.

For more information, contact Really Killer Systems, 106 Kenwood Road, Fayateville, GA 30214; (770)460-0872 or (800)360-1960; fax (770)460-6682.



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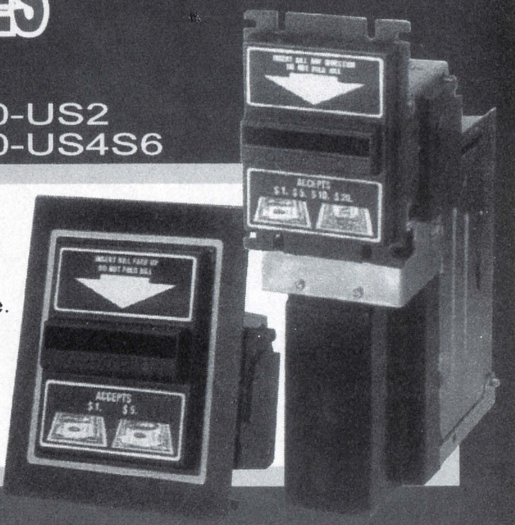
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1. Insert money
2. Select card price
3. Take card
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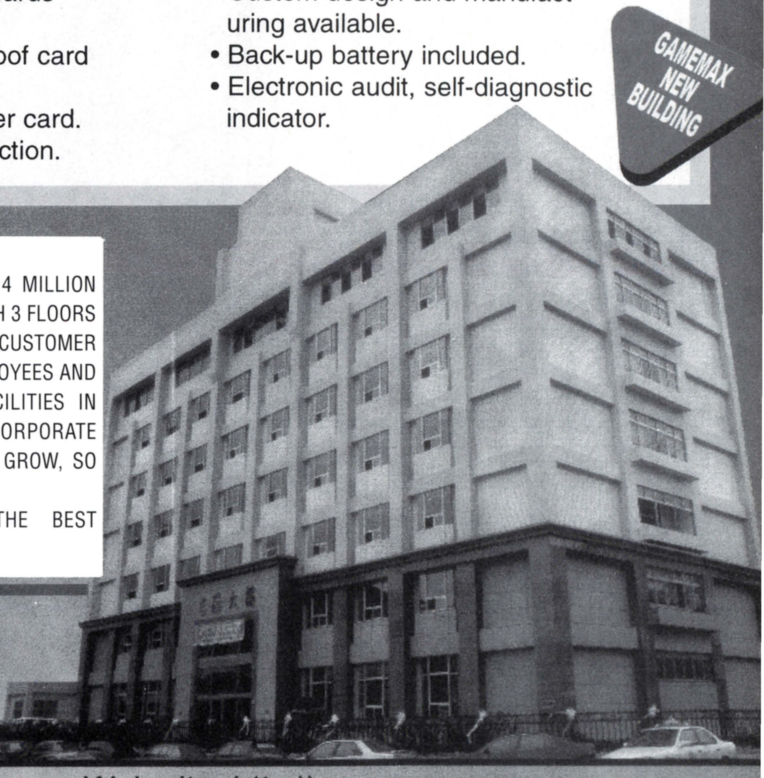
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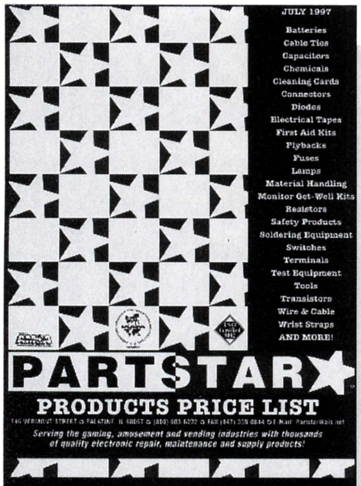
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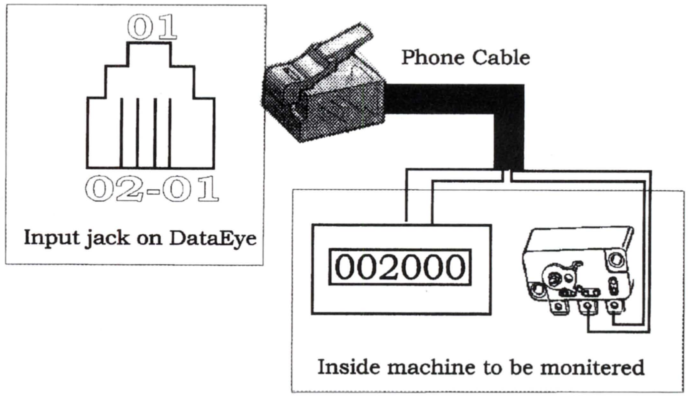
For more information, contact Partstar, 746 Vermont St., Palantine, IL 60067; (800)603-6222; fax (847)359-0844; e-mail (Partstar@ais.net).


01
02-01
Input jack on DataEye
Phone Cable
002000
Inside machine to be monitered

DATAEYE 3000

DataEye presents the DataEye 3000, which can be applied to a larger number of machines than the 2000 unit, which was limited to 40. The data collection system allows operators to remotely track the operation of any type of coin-op machine, bill changer, etc.

Installation requires a minimal amount of material and time and once in place it requires no maintenance. If arcade machines are rotated or replaced, changes in the software can be made to reflect the move. DataEye will read each input against the pre-determined denomination and present compiled data at the touch of a button.

The DataEye Link Windows Software which is included with each model sold, offers multiple features such as quarterly reports and allows multiple viewings without master clearing data.

For more information, contact DataEye, 2751 Highway 17 South, Suite A, Garden City, SC 29567; (800)395-6912; fax (803)238-5559.

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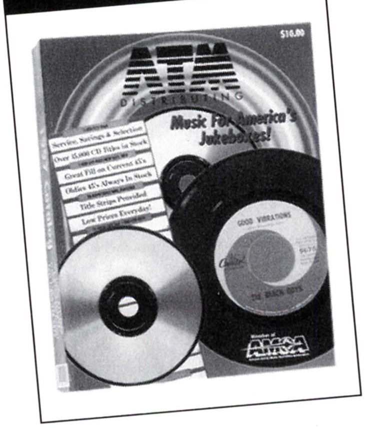
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ATM Distributing has completed its latest jukebox music catalog with lists of both CDs and 45s. It includes an index of oldie 45s, listings of best-selling compilation discs, and cross references.

The catalog also introduces the company's new frequent purchaser program, ATM Rewards, which provides merchandise incentives to frequent buyers. Copies are free to qualified recipients.

ATM provides pre-recorded music to the jukebox industry. The company uses a real-time computer system to provide rapid delivery from over 15,000 titles always on hand. Each order always includes computer-generated Rowe and NSM title cards.

For more information, contact ATM Distributing, 11012 Aurora Hudson Road, Streetsboro, OH 44241-1629; (216)528-0405; fax (216) 528-0409; e-mail (jbinfo@arrdis.com); Web site (http://www.arrdis.com).

INET 2

Building on the success of last year's INET Public Access Internet Web Browser kit, Two-Bit Score announces the INET 2, which facilitates the implementation of the Intel Open Arcade Architecture proposed earlier this year for the coin-op industry.

The stand-alone circuit board connects to a bill acceptor, keyboard, mouse, and computer to create a complete coin-op machine with bookkeeping, cash control, timer, and command functions.

Additional features include an on-board credit accumulator for a coin switch and/or bill acceptor, keyboard and mouse lockouts, a keyboard emulator to control the machine in the attract mode, and a large red LED display detailing credits and time remaining. INET 2 works with any combination of mouse, trackball, keyboard, or push buttons.

For more information, contact Two-Bit Score, 4418 Pack Saddle Pass, Austin, TX 78745; (512)447-8888; fax (512)447-8895; Web site (http://www.twobit.com/inet).

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Contact East offers its 1997 Catalog update, a 64-page booklet packed with hundreds of new test instruments, tools and supplies for security managers, service engineers, installers, technicians, and electricians.

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Also included are the company's popular lines of handheld oscilloscopes, soldering/desoldering systems, static protection products, ozone-safe cleaners, inspection equipment, workbenches, shipping cases, and more.

For more information, contact Contact East, 335 N. Andover, MA 01845; (508)682-2000; fax (508)688-7829.

NEW ITEMS FROM KING PLUSH

Looking to make a big impression with redemption or crane pre-packs. King Plush has now introduced jumbo 30" talking Mickey Mouse and Minnie Mouse, both of which giggle and say more than 20 phrases.

Big impressions also come in small packages at King Plush including Disney's Little Mermaid (9"-4 asst.) and Hercules (7"-4 asst.). The company also recently introduced its collection of colorful Bean Bag Plush Animals (6-1/2" to 7-1/2").

For more information, contact King Plush, P.O. Box 4428, Carson, CA 90749; (310)834-0499; fax (310)834-7005; Web site (http:www.king-plush.com).

PERMABELLA

Waterloo Tent & Tarp has two new ways to make shade. The Permabella and Marquee Frame Tent are ideal shade options for family entertainment centers and amusement parks.

The Permabella line of umbrellas is designed for optimum safety and ease of installation. They utilize a 4" diameter pole set 3' in concrete. Many color combinations are available as well as custom graphics and logos. Customers can choose from 12', 14', and 20' diameter units.

The new Marquee Frame Tent systems are ideal for large and small corporate or group picnics and parties. The Marquee is a premium quality frame tent system with advanced tension structure principles. The framework utilizes 2-1/2" aircraft aluminum alloy, and the heat treated aluminum alloy castings come with a lifetime guarantee. No special tools or equipment are needed for installation. The system comes in 12 standard sizes including three unique Hexagon shapes. A variety of color options and graphics are available. New for 1997 is a 40 x 40 model with only four corner legs.

For more information, contact Waterloo Tent & Tarp, 1029 Commercial St., Waterloo, IA 50702; (319)234-4679 or (800)537-1193; fax (319) 234-4670. ▲

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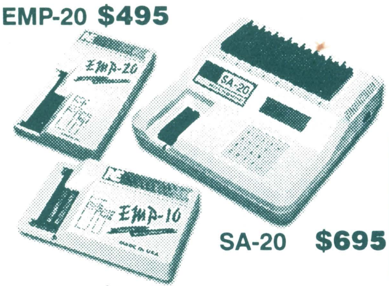

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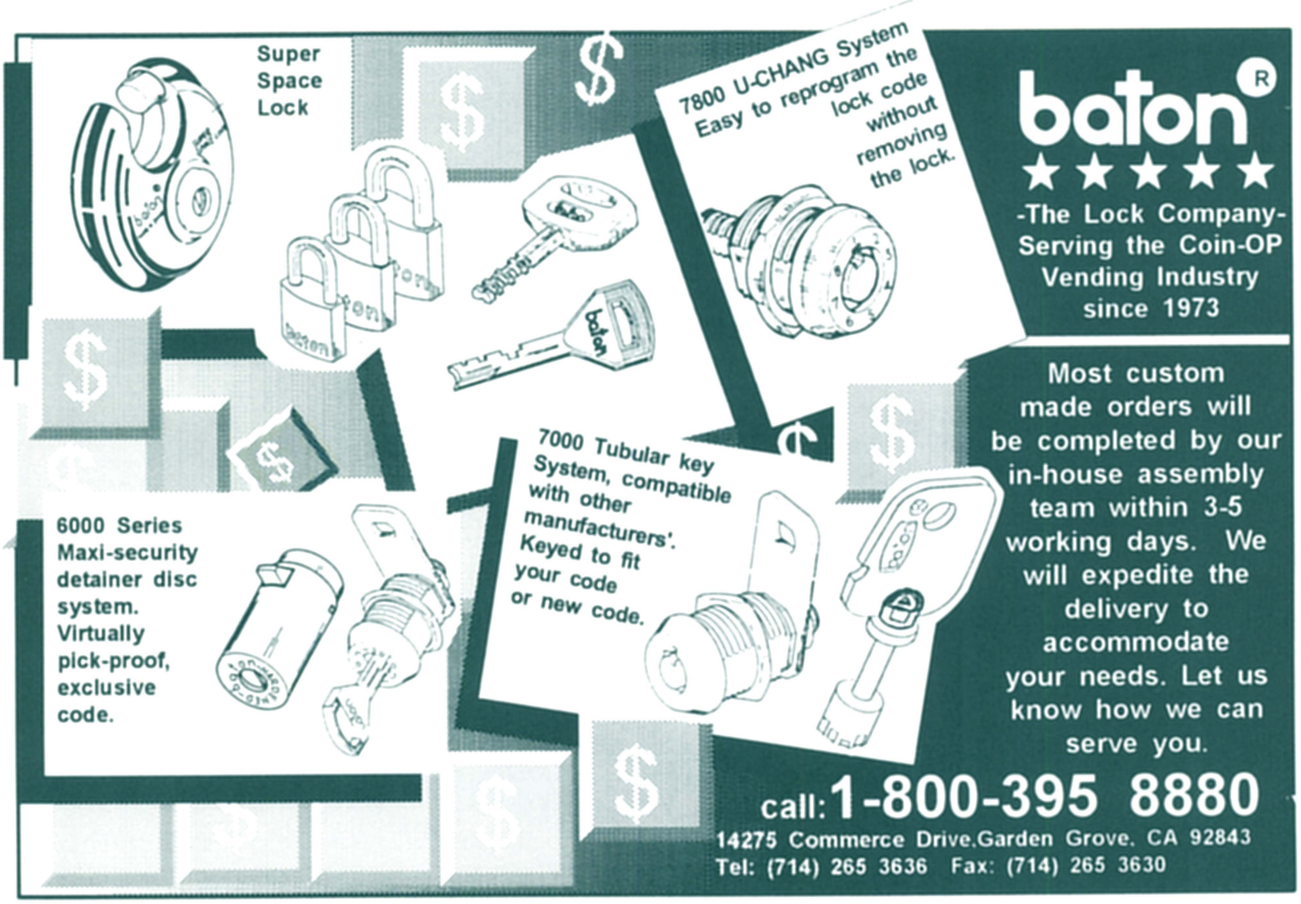

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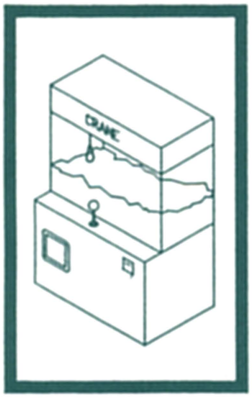
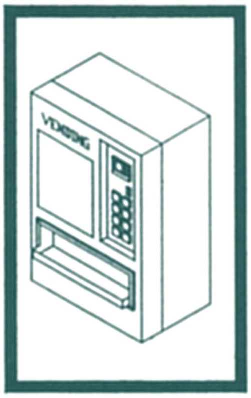


CRANE MACHINES



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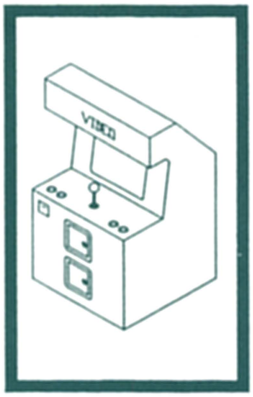

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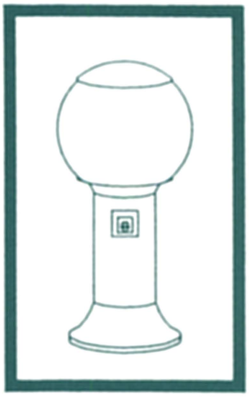

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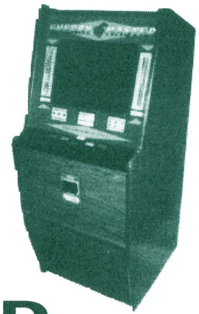

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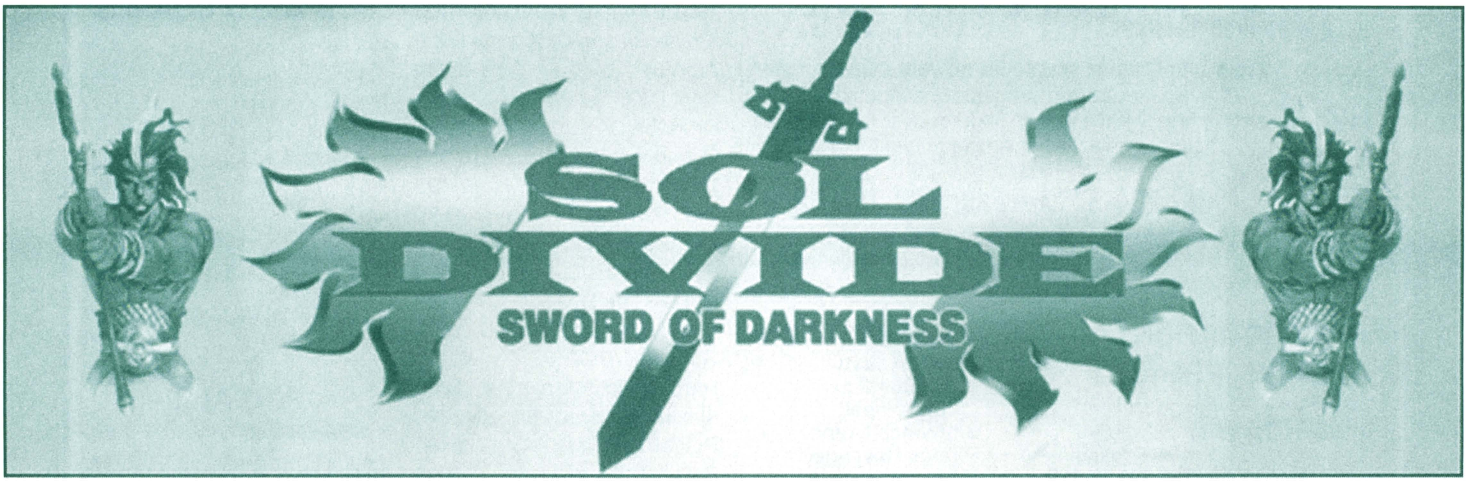

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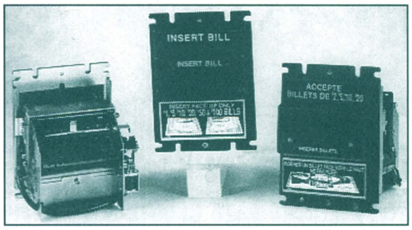

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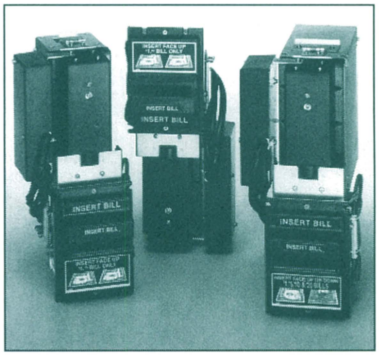

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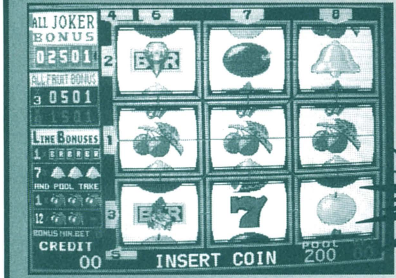
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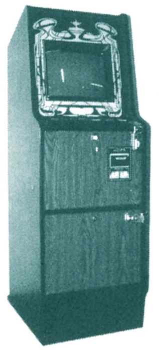

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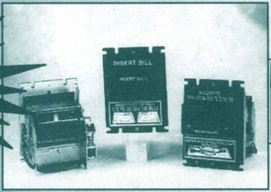

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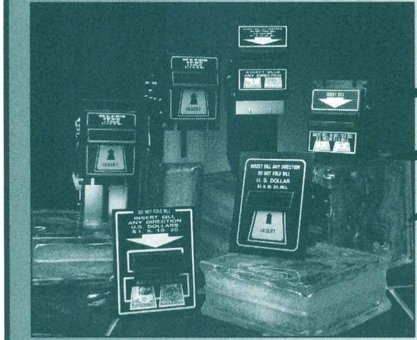

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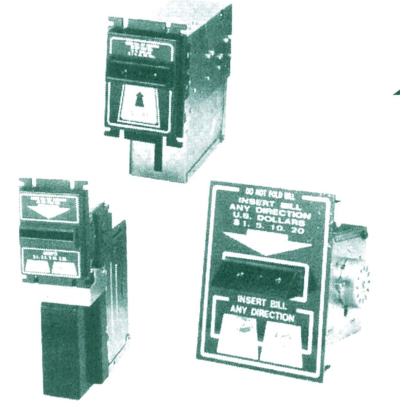
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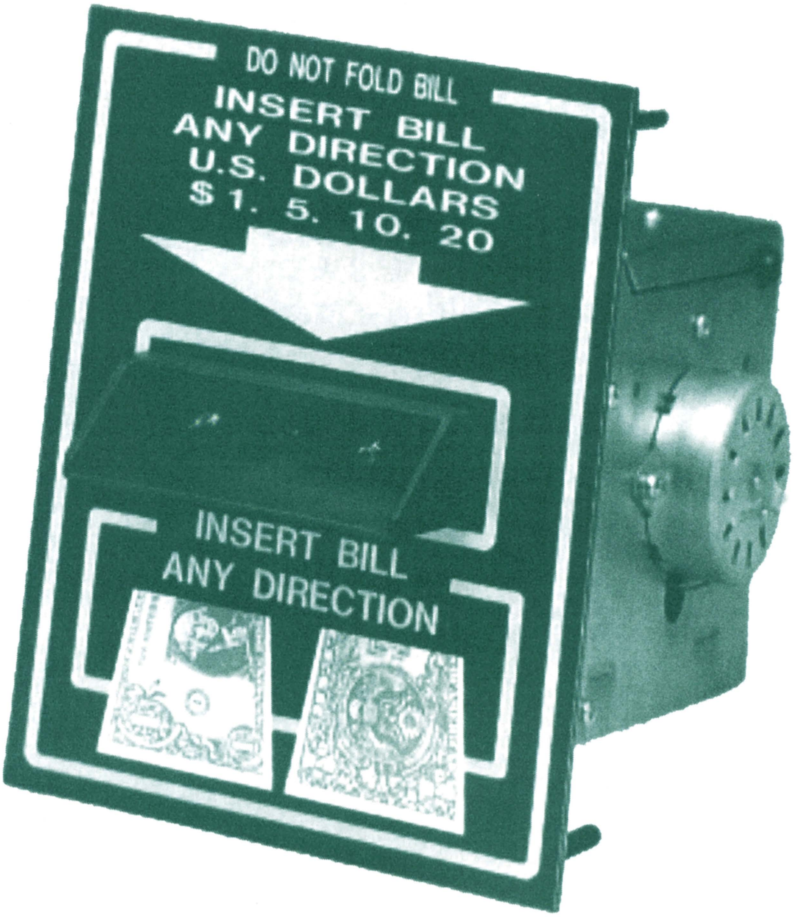

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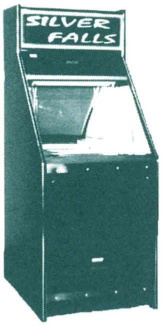

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NOTICE FROM

LEISURE ENTERTAINMENT, LTD.

FOR YOUR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION

In a lawsuit entitled "LEISURE ENTERTAINMENT, LTD. v GEORGE YOUNG and FRANK AZZURRO, individually, and doing business under the firm names and styles of "GAMEMAX USA" and "GAMEMAX" and LS ENTERPRISES" (Defendants), which is presently pending in the U.S. District Court, Judge Jacob S. Mishler, on August 1, 1997, enjoined all of the the Defendants from selling, offering to sell, distributing or marketing HSV-300 bill acceptors, and from accepting any shipments of HSV-300 bill acceptors from Taiwan.

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LEISURE ENTERTAINMENT, LTD.

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK
---x

LEISURE ENTERTAINMENT, LTD.

Plaintiff,

-against-

GEORGE YOUNG and FRANK AZZURRO,
Individually, and doing business
under the firm names and styles
of "GAMEMAX USA" and "GAMEMAX",
and LS ENTERPRISES,

Defendants.
x---

CV 97-3573

Amended Order

The plaintiff having by written application on the 1st day of August, 1997 and the defendants having the opportunity on the same date to respond to said application,

NOW, upon motion of plaintiff, LEISURE ENTERTAINMENT, LTD., it is

ORDERED that the order of this Court dated the 24th day of July, 1997 shall remain in full force and effect pending the further order of this Court, and it is further

ORDERED, that the defendants GEORGE YOUNG and FRANK AZZURO, individually, and doing business under the firm names and styles of "GAMEMAX USA" and "GAMEMAX"; and LS ENTERPRISES, their attorneys, agents, officers, representatives, subsidiary corporations or businesses, independent contractors, employees, and all persons acting in concert with them or on their behalf, directly or indirectly, are hereby enjoined and restrained from accepting any shipments of HSV-300 bill acceptors shipped from Gamemax in Taiwan pending the further order of this court, and it is further

ORDERED, that said defendants are hereby enjoined and restrained from selling, offering to sell, distributing or marketing HSV-300 bill acceptors until the further order of this court, and it is further

ORDERED, that plaintiff post a bond in the amount of $100,000 in accordance with Fed. R. Civ. P. 65(c).

Jacob Mishler
JACOB MISHLER, U.S. District Judge

Dated: Uniondale, NY
August 1, 1997

@ 1:45 p.m.

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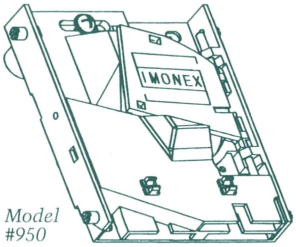

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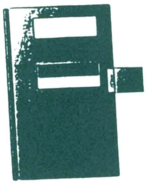
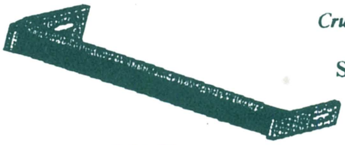
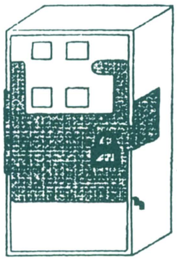


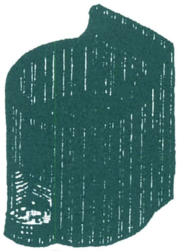


S-31-PL

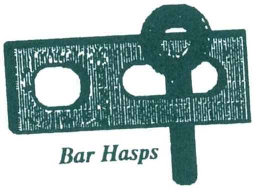
Cruisin', Daytona, Sega Rally - Style S-58

San Francisco Rush - Style S-74



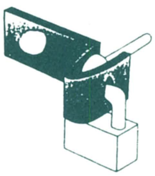


Can/Cup/Coin Holder

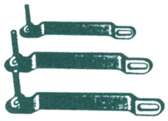


Bar Hasps

Style S-7



Style S-9-12
Style S-9-16
Style S-9-25



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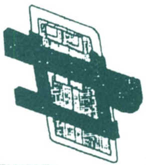

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September

6th	13th	20th	20th	27th	27th
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October

11th	18th
Tampa, FL	**Louisville, KY**
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November

1st	8th	15th	22th	29th	29th
Indianapolis, IN	**Columbus, OH**	Collector's Auctions **Chicago, IL** **Ramada Inn - O'Hare**	**Kansas City, KS**	**Des Moines, IA**	**Pennsauken, NJ**
Our Land Pavilion Indiana State Fairgrounds, 1202 East 38th Street Cellular: 317-432-7626 At Reorder Tone Dial: 502-551-1866	Buckeye Building, Ohio State Fairgrounds 17th Avenue & I-71, Exit 111 Cellular: 614-271-7626 At Reorder Tone Dial: 502-551-1866	6600 N. Manhiem Road, Rosemont, IL *7th Annual Pinhead Collector's Auction in association with Pinball Expo '97.* Attendance information contact: Rob Berk at 1-800-323-3547 A 10% Buyers Premium will be applied.	Wyandotte Co. Fairgrounds 1405 North 98th Street *For information call* **Tom Rhoades** at 515-774-8424	University and E. 30th St. Iowa State Fairgrounds *For information call* **Tom Rhoades** at 515-774-8424	South Jersey Expo Center, 2323 Route 73 *For information call* **Rob** at 609-729-5374

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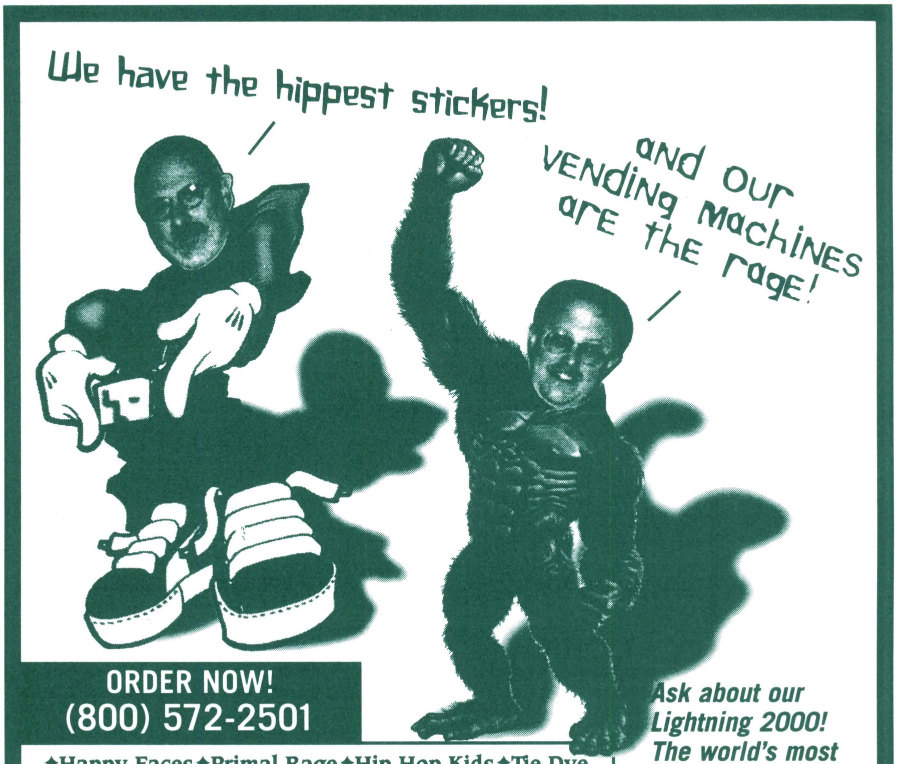
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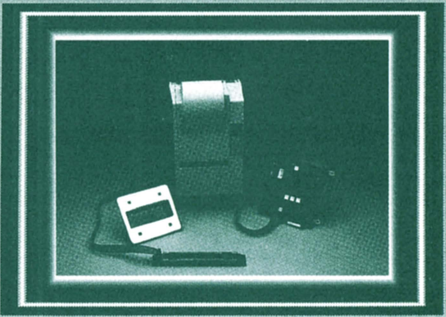

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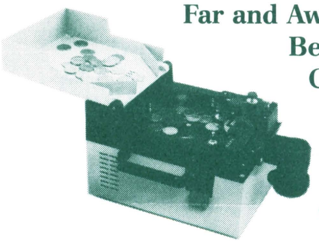

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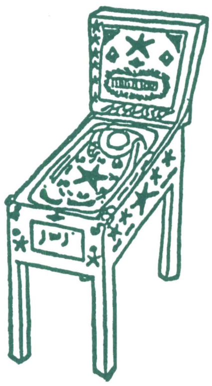

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SAT., SEPTEMBER 13, 1997 at 10:00 a.m.

Knoxville Convention Center

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* MOTEL RESERVATIONS -- World's Fair Holiday Inn, (615) 522-2800

* Mention Auction Game Sales for $68.00 rate! -- TN Lic.#1623

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* **EQUIPMENT MAY BE CHECKED IN:** Friday--Noon until 9 p.m. or Saturday--8 a.m. until 10 a.m.

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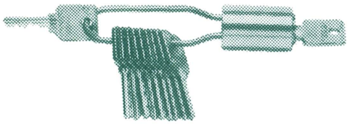

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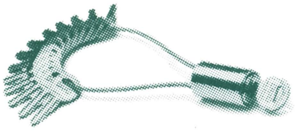

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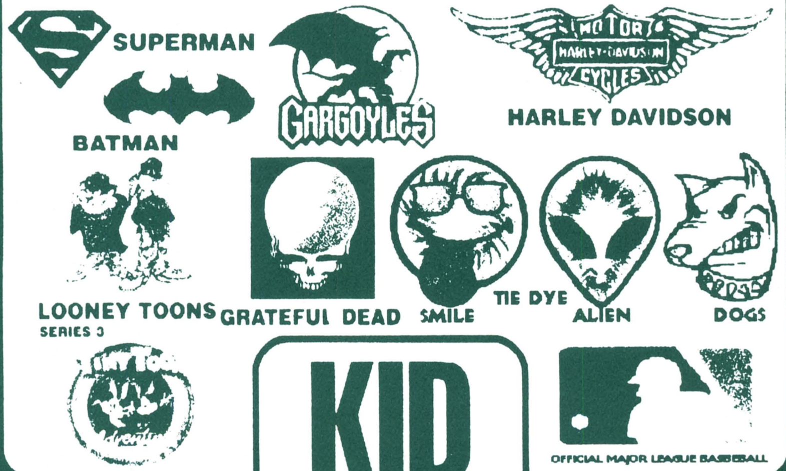
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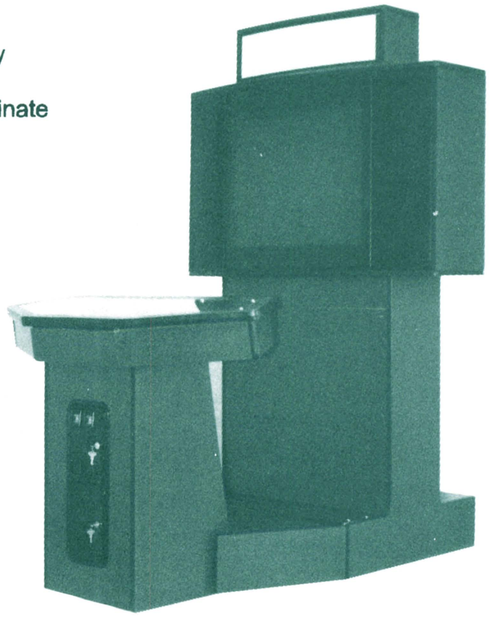

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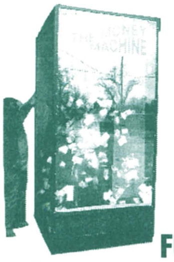

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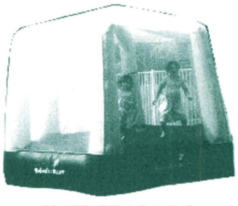

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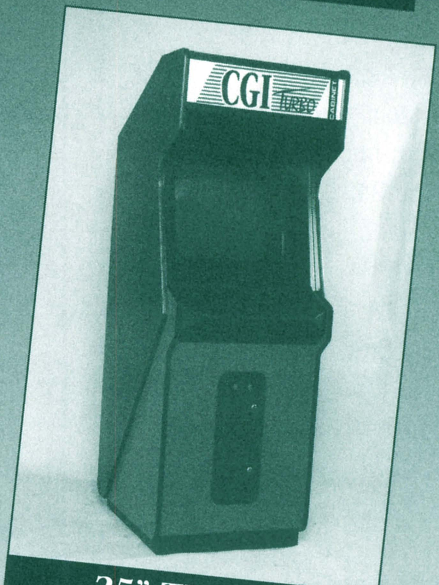

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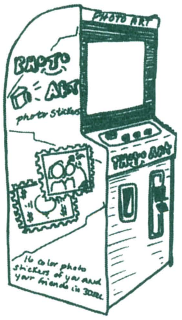
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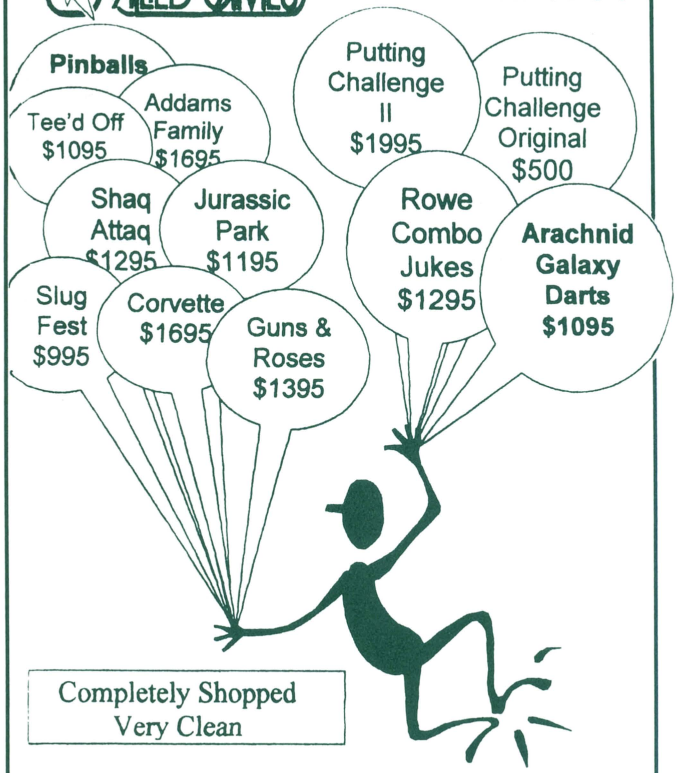
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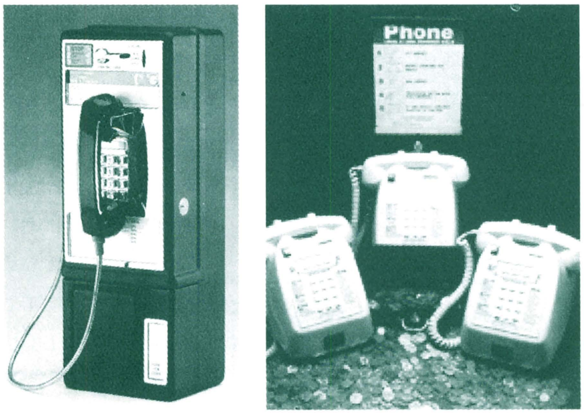

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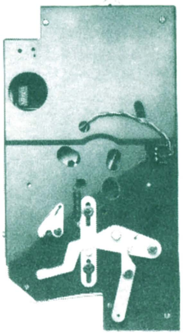

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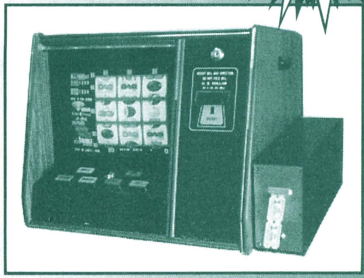

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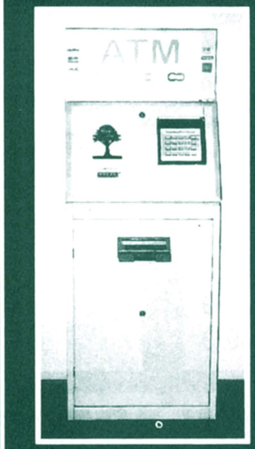

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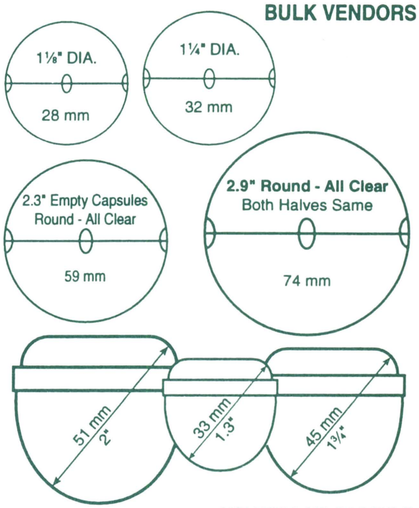
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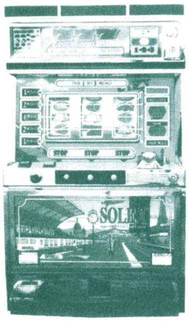

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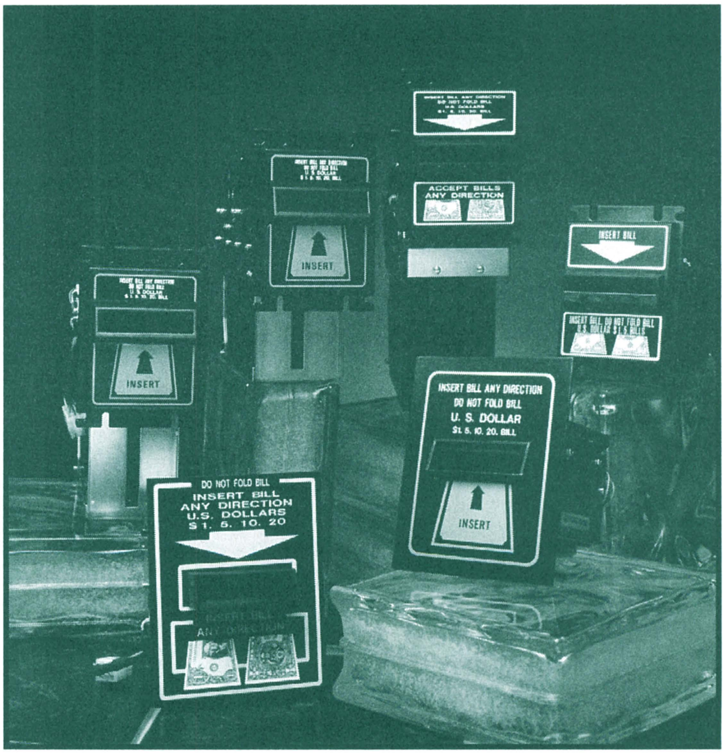
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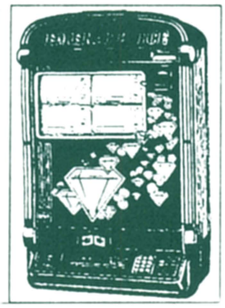

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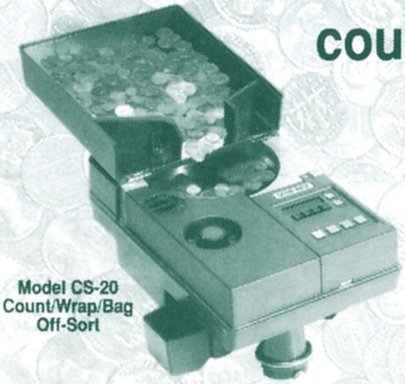

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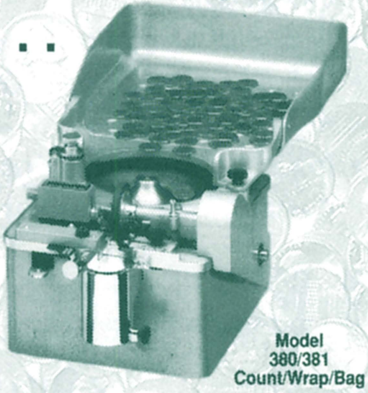

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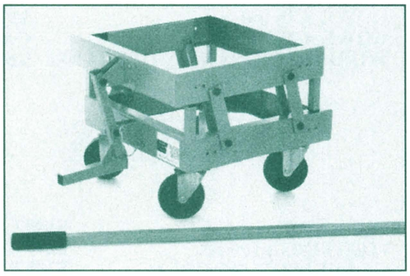

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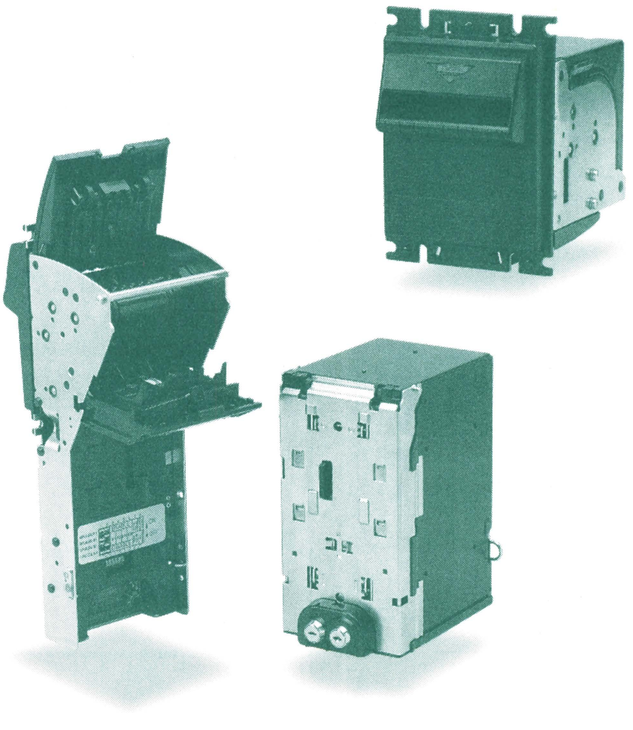

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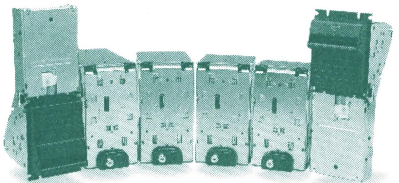

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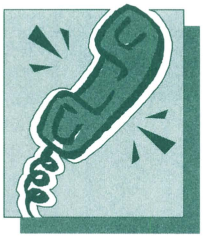

Modem Capable

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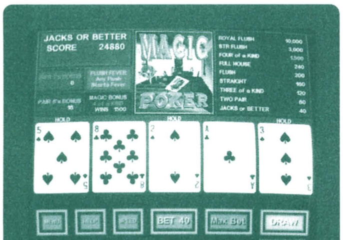
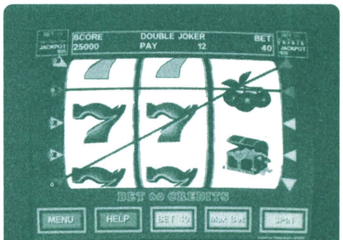
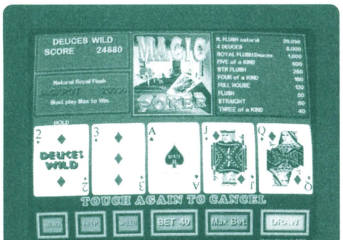


MAGIC POKER



DOUBLE JOKER



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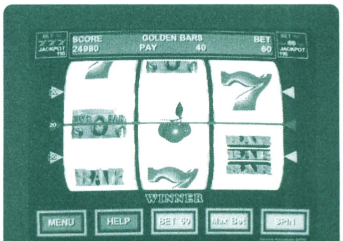

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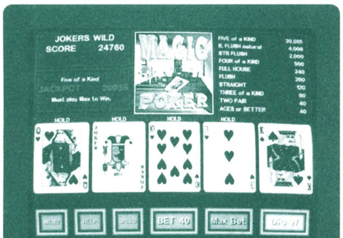
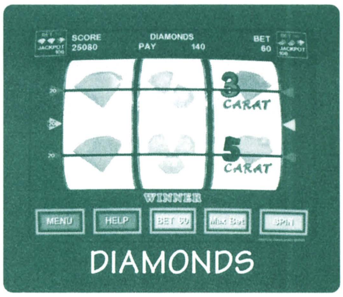
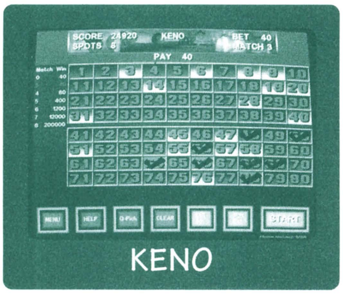


JOKERS WILD



DIAMONDS



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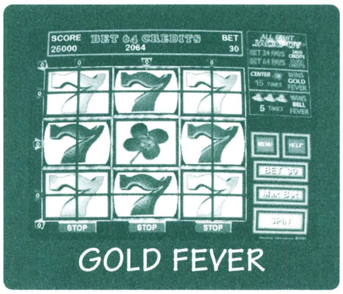
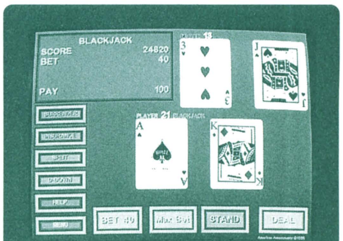


GOLD FEVER



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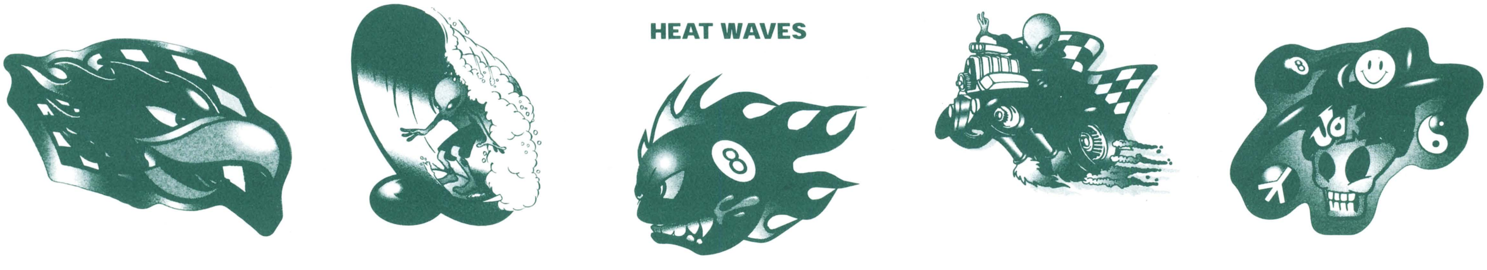

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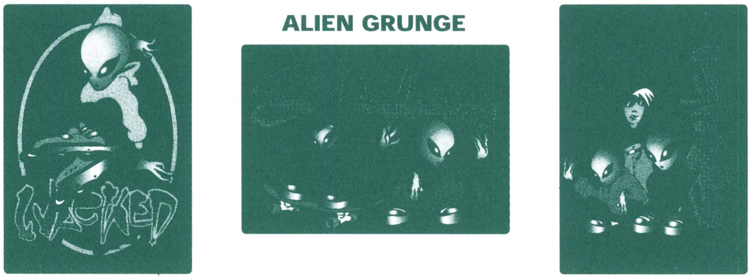

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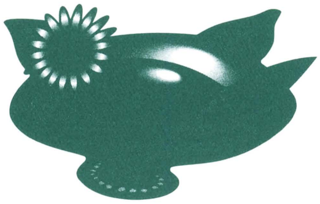

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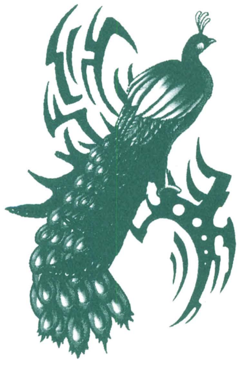

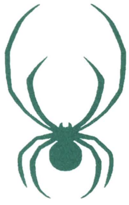

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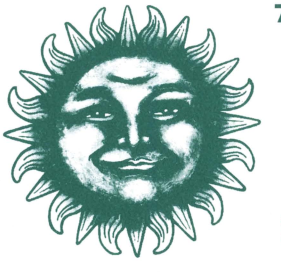

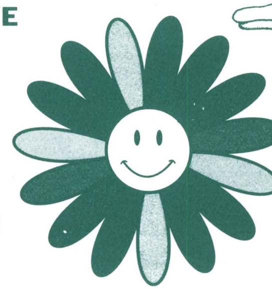

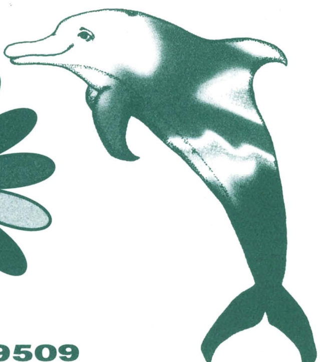

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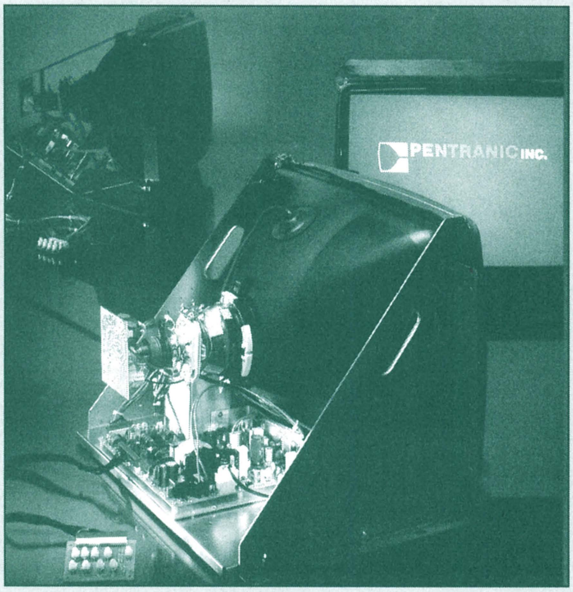

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	3	--	"Banda El Recodo"	De Parranda
	4	5	"Los Tucanes De Tijuana"	Tucanes de Oro
	5	3	"Los Tucanes De Tijuana"	Tucanes de Plata
	6	2	"Los Huracanes Del Norte"	Top Norteno
	7	6	"Los Originales De San Juan"	El Clavo
	8	8	"Bronco"	La Ultima Huella
	9	--	"Ezequiel Pena"	Me Dicen El Tirador
	10	4	"Banda Maguey"	El Mundo Gira
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	2	3	"Fito Olivares"	Con Amor Y Con Sabor
	3	2	"Olga Tanon"	Llevame Contigo
	4	--	"Grupo Niche"	The Best
	5	5	"Victor Manuelle"	A Pesar De Todo
	6	1	"Ilegales"	Rebotandor
	7	--	"Tito Rojas"	Humildemente
	8	9	"Julio Iglesias"	Tango
	9	10	"Grupo Mania"	Esta De Moda
	10	8	"Compilation"	Merengon
POP	1	5	"Los Mismos"	Juntos Para Siempre
	2	1	"Juan Gabriel & Rocio Durcal"	Juntos Otra Vez
	3	3	"Los Temerarios"	En Concierto Vol. II
	4	4	"Marco Antonio Solis"	En Pleno Vuelo
	5	2	"Enrique Iglesias"	Vivir
	6	--	"Caifanes"	Lo Mejor De
	7	--	"Guardianes Del Amor"	Teamo Todavia
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	9	--	"Mana"	Cuando Los Angeles Lloran
	10	--	"Marisela"	Borron Y Cuenta Nueva
TEJANO	1	1	"Los Angeles Azules"	Inolvidables
	2	--	"Alberto Zamora"	No Puedo Quererte
	3	--	"Ruben Vela"	Me Avente Otra Vez
	4	2	"Conjunto Primavera"	Sangre De Valiente
	5	5	"La Mafia"	En Tus Manos
	6	--	"Michael Salgado"	Mi Primer Amor
	7	10	"Los Palominos"	Duele El Amor
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AD INDEX

For advertiser ***Hyperlinks*** visit: www.playmeter.com

A&A Co. .73
Advanced Games & Engineering (AGE) .114, 138
American Changer .19, 85
AMOA .51
Arachnid .33
Asahi Seiko .31
Atari Games .Cover 4, 26-27
Automated Batting Cages .134
Bay-Tek .76
Benchmark Entertainment .52
Bob's Space Racers .41
Brand Imports .117
Capcom .28-29
Castle Golf .92
CGI .139
Challenger Industries .94
Champion Shuffleboard .137
Chicago Lock .113
Coin ConneXion .109
Cost of Wisconsin .92
DataEye .89
Deltronic Labs .63
Entropy USA .123
ForainExpo .49
Fun Merchants .37
GameMax .143
Hoffman & Hoffman .56
I.C.E. .61
IAAPA .93
IAFEC Silent Auction .101
Imperial International .6
Incredible Technologies .21
J&S Suppliers .132
Kid Zone .115
Kiddie's Manufacturing .55
KidzKart .134
Konami .17
Lazer-Tron .45
MagikKastle .120
Mali & Co. .132
Markel Insurance .121
Master Pitching Machine .124
Merit Industries .42-43
Micro Manufacturing .53
Muncie Novelty .12
Music Operator Sales .32
Namco America .10-11, 57
National Ticket .40
New Orleans Novelty .107
NSM-America .23
One Stop Toys .137
Plush Appeal .15
Premier Data .47
Prizes! .106
Rainbow Crane .13
Randy Fromm's Arcade School .127
Rhode Island Novelty .69
Roger Williams Mint .20
Rowe International .Cover 3
Scan Coin .124
Sega GameWorks .7
Seidel Amusement Machine Co. .67
Selectra .97
Silent Partner .130
Skee-Ball .61
SNK .5
Success Plush .9
Thomson Entertainment .25
TouchTunes Digital Jukebox .Cover 2, 78
Valley Recreation .79
Van Brook of Lexington .107
Williams .39
World Gaming Congress .59
Wurlitzer .106

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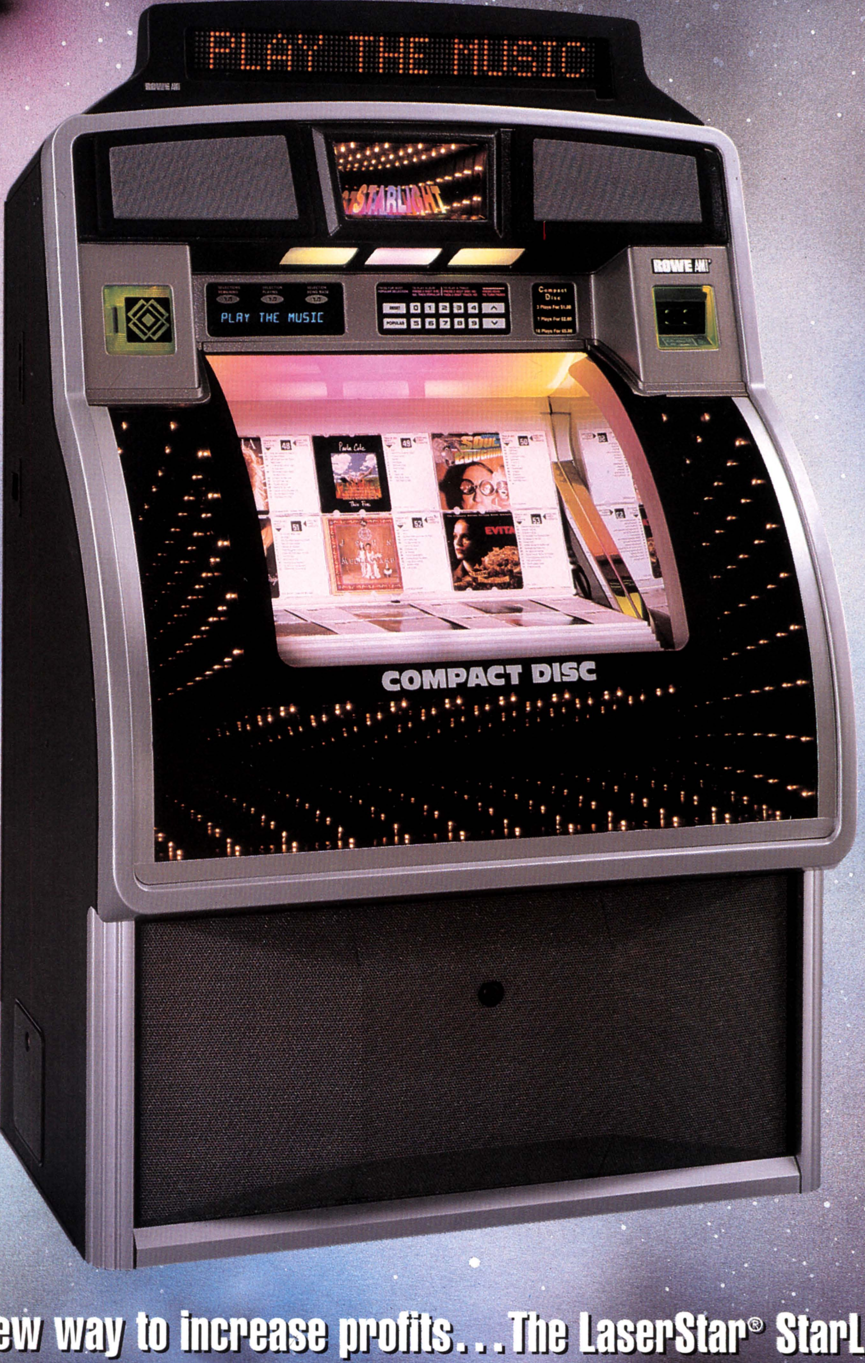

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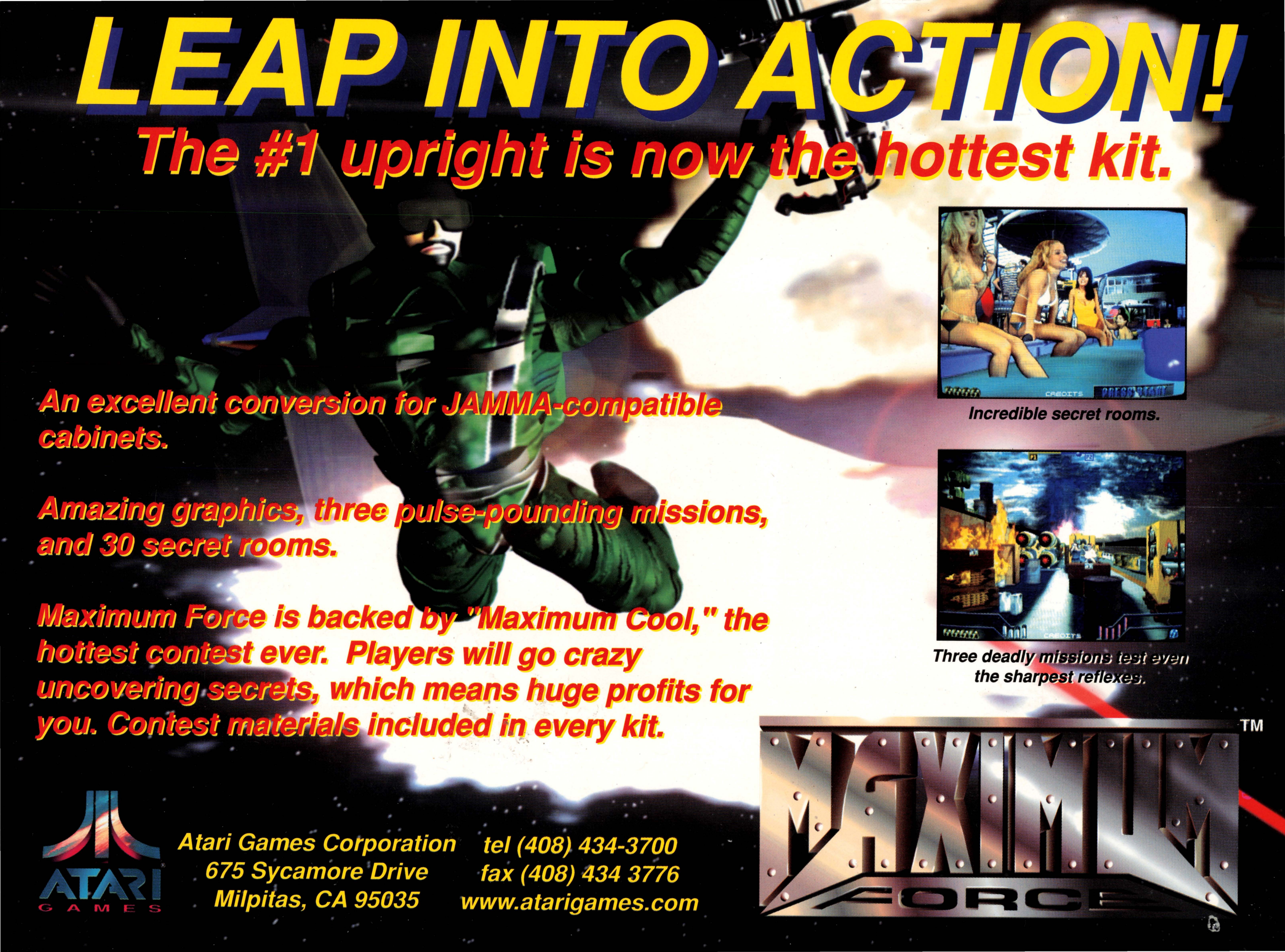

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